

# KENNEDY OF GLENHAUGH



DAVID MACLURE



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# KENNEDY OF GLENHAUGH

*Being a faithful history of the strange happening  
that befell Master John Kennedy, seventh Laird  
of Glenhaugh, in the year of Grace 1789, and  
set forth by Adam Gillicuddy, Factor  
and General Steward at  
Glenhaugh*

BY

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A ROMANCE," ETC.

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TO MY MOST HELPFUL CRITIC,  
MY WIFE.







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# KENNEDY OF GLENHAUGH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### MY LADY'S DEPARTURE.

A SPIRITED and adventurous folk were my Laird's people, with a grand name for loyalty to conscience and justice, and never the folk to plot or plan an evil thing, nor yet to suffer a wrong at any man's hand to go unrepaid, and to this day in all of our part of the country to its farthest corners you may hear many a tale in honor of them, and their pith and daring are well remembered, and are as fireside proverbs.

The last Laird, my master, was a man of the most worthy traits, and I am sure no man lived that could truly speak a word to his discredit, for the name of Kennedy of Glenhaugh was held among all people as a warrant of very honorable and sterling character. A man he was as well both lovable and loving, being God-fearing and just, and having, as I can



bear witness, a heart single to the cause of virtue and a hand ever open to charity.

My master was just the sweetest man, I think, that walked the earth, and it was ever like a glint of sunshine the sight of his face. A most approachable man was he with one mood unchanging, and that both free and kindly, and indeed if he had need to be serious, it was never in his manner to be either sour or sulky, or to open his lips to speak a cruel or bitter word. A jovial, bluff, and genial man, outspoken, fair, and affectionate he was, and when his spirits were high, fond of a bit of pleasantry, and no man readier to have a hearty laugh. He had, as well, a most easy manner of speech, using the familiar Doric of the people about him, and indeed among all men, both high and low, he was held in esteem as a man of wise counsel, fair speech, and very affectionate heart. I dwell upon these things the more, in view of the strange happenings that came, and to make known the virtues of a life that ere long came to be most grievously troubled and changed.

As for my Lady, it was little fault any could find in her, for she was truly a woman of gentle manners and even temper, having a quiet dignity about her to command the respect of all,



and even if she could not win the love that the Laird got, yet I am sure there was never a tongue to speak ill of her more than to say she was a bit reserved and distant, and not like to take many into her confidence. I sometimes looked at my Lady and thought I saw in her the traces of some past trouble, and yet I cannot say that I saw this clearly, but as a dim thing only, as if it were the faintest shadow of some cloud that had hung over her and had passed long ago.

It came about when I had been at Glenhaugh for seven years, and was well installed in the performance of my duties as steward, that my master was called away on a long journey to Stirling, in the North, to see about a parcel of land lying in the neighborhood of the "Links o' Forth," and being entangled in the meshes of a legal dispute. We made great preparation for getting him off properly, for the road was a long one, and it would be a month at least before he could be back at Glenhaugh, even if all went well with him. At last he was gotten off, and I was left in charge of affairs till his return.

I well remember his leave-taking of his wife and his wee maid Marion, who was just passing her sixth year. My Laird just took my



Lady in his arms, and she clung about his neck as though she were never to see him more, and as for the lassie Marion, she made matters terribly affecting with her childish prattle and affection, so that I was fain to turn away to keep from making a fool of myself, and showing them all what a soft-hearted body I was.

Thirteen days was the Laird away from Glenhaugh, when there occurred an event which was the first in the strange chain of circumstances that was to follow, and which cast a shadow upon us never to be forgotten.

It was the evening of the thirteenth day of the Laird's absence, when old Geordie, the carrier, coming along the highroad from Abbeyfont, left a packet with me for my Lady of Glenhaugh. I took the packet into the house, and when I had gotten to the door of my Lady's apartment, I knocked, and my Lady, coming to the door herself, took the packet from me, and thanked me as was her habit, for she was never the woman to forget to be both mannerly and dignified.

The next day came Esther Ricalton, my Lady's maid, to me, and says, "I wadna say but my Lady has heard bad news o' some kind, for I heard her sobbin' and moanin' through





“SHE JUST STARTED AND TURNED WHITE AS IF SHE HAD SEEN  
A WRAITH.”







the nicht, and this mornin' she looks a guid ten years aulder than she did yestreen."

"I brought her a letter yestreen," said I, using the common manner of speech which was natural to me, "and belike some o' her friends are dead."

"It maun be so," said she, "for I saw ye gie her the packet, and was in the room wi' her when she opened it. She just started and turned white as if she had seen a wraith, and gave a groan so pitifu' like as if her heart were crushed within her. Not a word did she say to me, and I ken nae mair than this, that she suffered wi' some sair trouble o' mind a' the nicht; but she's a proud woman and a close-mouthed, and ne'er a word has she to say."

I did not see my Lady that day, but I heard from Esther again that, "Her een were red wi' weepin'," and that the lass Marion she had kept by her side "aye fondlin' o' her and greetin' o'er her."

The next day, which was the second after I had handed her the packet, my Lady sent for me. I left my accounts and went to her room where I found her alone, Marion being off to pluck gowans in the Abbey Glen with Esther.

My Lady received me with her usual courtesy, though she appeared a very sober woman,



and yet I saw no signs of tears in her face. She was more beautiful and dignified, I thought, than I had ever seen her, and she carried herself as proudly as a queen, but for all that, there was about her the sweetest and most gentle graciousness that ever woman had, and she was just grand, I thought, in keeping control of herself and her grief, so unlike the common raft of auld wives in our part of the country, who snivel and yowl and rock themselves when sorrow comes near them.

“Good Master Gillicuddy,” said she, when she had offered me a chair and closed the door, “do you think the Laird has gotten to Stirling by this?”

“If all has gone weel wi’ him,” I said, “he is now there safely lodged, and weel into the business that took him there.”

“And how long, think you,” she asked me, “will he be in concluding all his plans there? You are well acquainted with all that is to be done, and will know, I am sure.”

“Aye, my Lady,” I answered, “the Laird has fully explained everything to me, and indeed, as to the business in hand, he wad no’ be able to see the end o’ it for far mair than a fortnight frae the day he left Glenhaugh.”



She paused to think a minute, and turned away her head partly, biting her lip as if in anxious perplexity what next to say, and went on: "I think I must leave Glenhaugh at once. I think there be yet time to reach the Laird before he is ready to return, and—if I should by any evil chance miss him, and—we should not meet—you may say to him—that he may just bide till I come back."

After I had got my breath, for I was staggered by this sudden turn in our quiet routine of life, I asked: "And Marion, the wee lass, what o' her?"

"She will stay with you, good Gillicuddy, and you will look after her welfare truly, I know," and I could see that she checked a sob that was rising in her throat as she said this.

"That I will, my Lady," I said.

She never opened her lips to tell me a word more of the mystery of it all, but turned away in silence, and I could read in my Lady's face that it would not be wise to seek for more than she offered, so after a long audience with her touching upon other matters, and she had given me many charges as to how I was to conduct all things, and cherish her wee lass till her return, I took my leave of her and set about the



hasty preparations to get her off to her husband at Stirling.

The next morning saw my Lady's leave-taking of her wee lass Marion, and all the women in the house swore to be mothers to her till my Lady came back. Ah! but my Lady was a tender woman, and the love she bore her wee lass, as I now look back to it, was most deep and beautiful. It was as though she could never get off, but must aye cling to the bonny wee thing, and tear herself away with a great effort, ever to come back again and clasp the bairn passionately to her bosom and lay her cheek close to hers in a yearning and pathetic caress, but no tear did she shed. Her heart and her love were more eloquent in her face than any words could ever tell, and I thought I had never witnessed so intense a passion of mother love as this beautiful lady showed to her wee maid. As for the lass herself, she just gave back the measure of all she received in the most beautiful simplicity of a child's affection, twining her arms about her mother's neck, and nestling close to her with a sweetness and gentleness of feeling that was like to make us all who saw it just give way altogether and let the tears run down our cheeks as they would. At last, with a brave agony,



for I mind it well, my Lady just drew the wee lass to her, and then raising her eyes upward, as though she asked heaven to watch over the child, she gave a sob of the deepest sadness and turned away.

Ah, I can never forget the piteous white face I saw then, nor the brave, resolved purpose that was written there in the beautiful, sad countenance of my Lady. 'Deed, the memory rests upon me as I write, and I must pause a bit, for a mist of tears is gathering in my old eyes. Never did my Lady look back, but once, and that was when she was at the turning of the approach that leads to the Abbeyfont highway. There, as I stood beside her, holding the door of the coach, and she about to enter, she turned and looked to Glenhaugh, and there, between the west towers, on the high stair platform the wee lass Marion was standing bravely waving her hands, with the servants standing below her at the court entrance huddled together with their aprons at their eyes, trying to smile through their tears. As my Lady looked for one brief moment she kissed her hand and smiled, but under her smile there was a look of the bravest, sweetest anguish, and though her eyes were just swimming in water, yet I saw no tear fall from them.



## CHAPTER II.

“ I DINNA LIKE THE LOOK O’ IT.”

A FORTNIGHT went by, and we were beginning to speak of the return of my master and his Lady, and in another week we were all busy at Glenhaugh in getting everything in order to receive them back to their own house and hall, and were expecting every post-chaise that came through from the north to land them at Abbeyfont, the nearest posting town, where Hughie McNaughton was waiting with suitable conveyance to take them up and bring them home.

We had made our preparations for their home-coming with not a little pride, and we looked forward to a very gladsome time. Wee Marion was not behind in the spirit of the occasion, but was all happiness and anticipation, and Esther and she had been up to the Abbey Glen, and the two had brought home a wealth of late wild flowers and green vines, which were disposed about the house to evidence the beauty of the welcome we had to offer. Espe-



cially in my Lady's apartments we had decked the walls, and over my Lady's cabinet had banked wild flowers till the place was a fairy bower.

When the post-chaise passed through Abbeyfont, there was my Laird, but not my Lady. Hughie McNaughton and the Laird were not long in coming to the point on the situation of things, and the Laird was sorely harassed, having not set eyes on his wife or heard of her since the day he left Glenhaugh. He came on to the house with haste, and I was the first to meet him there. He was terribly wrought up and anxious, putting me to my mettle to answer all his questions.

"The Lady left a packet for ye," said I. "It wasna left in my hands, but she said ye'd find it on the cabinet."

"We'll read the packet," said he, "and we'll get the mystery solved frae that."

He went to my Lady's room and searched high and low, but no packet was there, and nothing that would tell him aught of the cause of his wife's journey.

"I canna understand the loss o' the packet," said he, "there's a mystery about it, and cursed be evil fortune for that."

"The words she spoke to me were, my



Laird," I said, "' Ye'll just say to him that he maun bide till I come back.' "

He only replied, " I canna understand it. I dinna like the look o' it," and I thought I saw in him an awesome terror and misgiving that trouble was coming upon him.

My Laird searched every place where a letter might be concealed, and I gave him my help. We ransacked every shelf and drawer and disturbed every corner, but no paper or packet could we find to throw light upon my Lady's journey.

In two days, no word coming of my Lady, and no packet coming to light, my master set out diligently to make inquiry and search, and I did all I could to help him; but nothing could we learn. The Laird went back to Stirling searching step by step, and I posted letters to every quarter where intelligence would be like to be had.

At Stirling, after a keen inquiry, naught was learned beyond the fact that my Lady had not been there. All the way back, at every town and hostelry the most faithful inquiry failed to give a clew to her presence, though there were two or three evidences of my Lady's having passed through the first stages of her journey, but these evidences were indeed so vague



and contradictory that they brought no result of importance that could be of service or that could bring about any tangible outcome.

We failed not to post letters to every place where my Lady had friends, and answers came back that gave us no hope or clew, but my Laird was like a ferret and tracked every path, and so from one quest to another he went, seeking her in many quarters, but still without avail.

A fortnight went by, and a fortnight after that, and we had been busy in search of my Lady without rest, and all the people of our side of the country had heard of the story, and had lent their powers to discover her whereabouts, but still no track or trace of her could be gotten.

My master was now worn out by his search and his sufferings. It had been weeks of anguish and overstrain that he had seen. Every hope that had arisen had failed him, every journey had been vain. The days had been passed in such nerve-harassing activities and anxious, hurrying confusion that time seemed to have lost itself and vanished into a waste of chaotic hours with no defining periods or limits. The nights had lost their



significance of rest, and were become fever-oppressed and dream-haunted.

As the days followed one another, I could see the cruel marks they were leaving upon my master, and I was powerless to bring to him any counsel or comfort, and but for the faith I ever had in God's wisdom and goodness, I truly think I would have given way to despair utterly. When I saw my master's eyes roll wildly in his head, and watched the nervous twitching of his fingers, and the awful starts he made as though he heard sounds and voices in the silence, I felt that his mind was upon the brink of a precipice that affrighted me more than the shadows of death.

"By the Almighty, Gillicuddy," said he to me, "I think this be but living the life o' the damned, but I'm no' the man to sit and suffer like an auld wife wi' the rheumatism. Na, na, I'll hae the mystery o' it solved, my man, if I hae to snuff the air o' a' the quarters o' the globe; aye, and if I hae to delve i' the bowels o' the earth, and by God's wounds," said he, "I'll get at the bottom o' it yet, and if there be a creature that has done amiss, and laid this wrang upon me, there shall be nae mercy, I swear, and these hands o' mine shall hae vengeance, i' faith quick and sure."



He was terrible to look at as he spoke, and he brought his great hand down on the table where we stood, that was like to shatter it, and I saw the blood start from the flesh where it was torn by the blow he struck. His face was angry and flushed, and his eyes were wild and bloodshot, burning like coals, and he was the picture of a man like to do some cruel and fearsome thing.

"I dinna think ye are wise to let yersel' gang into a frenzy like this," said I. "Calm yersel', my Laird. Look, man, wi' yer madness ye hae brought the blood to yer hand."

I think my master gave me the first and only hard words that he had ever spoken to me. He turned upon me with a vicious frown, and I truly thought he was about to fell me with a blow.

"Talk no' to me o' calmness," he said, "lest ye rue it. Ye'd do weel to leave me, man, or I may do ye a sair bodily harm. There be a curse o' hell come upon me, and I wad strike ye to the earth i' the face o' God himsel' if ye put yersel' before me to hamper my mood wi' so little as a straw."

I left him sadly enough, and I can truly say that far from anger and resentment being in my mind at his words, there was only a great



pity and anxious love within me, and I thought my heart would never be lightened of the load it bore. I went to my room with a heavy heart, and the horror of his words, so profanely spoken, ringing in my ears, but I could find no other thought to dwell on than pity, and I just fell prone upon my bed and wept for him.



## CHAPTER III.

“ WHERE IS SHE THE NICHT? ”

WE were living in a hush of life now after the hurly-burly and movement that we had passed through for weeks past, and the people who had been busy about us, giving their help and sympathy, were now gone off about their own affairs, and not like to take further hand in the matter than to gossip at their own homes of it and wonder at the mystery of it all.

I had not had extended speech with the Laird since he had sworn to solve the mystery of his lady's loss, now two days gone, but I was well aware that he was not seeking rest or like to seek it, but was just putting all the energy of his being into some matter bearing upon his trouble. He kept within his own apartments during these days more than usual, I thought, and that was strange to me, but I soon learned the nature of his occupation.

I had gone to his room to seek advice upon



some matters of duty, and when he opened the door to my knock, I saw a scene of confusion. Every press and cabinet, every shelf and closet and corner had been ransacked and searched again and again, and my master stood among the confusion, flushed and excited, with his hand to his head, and his fingers nervously twitching in the tangled mass of his hair. He paused at my errand, and answered my question with an impatience that was far, far out of the way of his speech, and when I turned to go, he cried to me in a sort of exultance of tone:

“Eh, Gillicuddy, and we could but find the packet that was left, it wad hae a story to tell.”

“Aye,” said I, “but I’m thinking it canna be found.”

“Nay, Gillicuddy, if it was left, it must be found. It canna be so lost and hidden as she.”

“But a’ places hae been searched,” said I.

“Weel,” he replied, “just gang yer way, and leave me to gang over the hunt again.”

I remember that when I left him standing in his room, I went away with misgivings of dread, wondering what the outcome of all this wild unrest would be; and it was with a



sore heart and a mind distracted that I went to bed that night with a prayer that I offered on my knees to God, that in his gracious providence he would remember us all, and give us strength to bear the burdens laid upon us.

It was after midnight when I awoke and heard the solemn stroke of the clock far down the stair in the great hall. I lay awake, and my thoughts went back to my Laird again: "My poor, poor master, God pity you," I said to myself, and just at that moment there was my master standing beside my bed facing the window, and the faint light of the moon was shining on his wild and flushed face.

"Gillicuddy," said he, "are ye sleeping?" and his voice was hollow and husky, and I thought there was a tone of jeering mockery in it, and a sneering touch of malignity so unlike him.

I half arose from my bed and answered him, "No, I'm no' sleepin', and in the name o' God what brings ye here in the clouds o' the nicht?"

He uttered a sound like a choking sob, and then he bent down with his mouth close to my ear and whispered huskily, "Gillicuddy,



could ye mak' a guess where she is the night? "

"God only knows," said I.

"And he hasna been o' a mind to tell," he said, and there was a wicked sneer in his tone.

"Hoots, man, hoots!" I answered, for I was familiar with him in my talk, "Ye shouldna say that."

He squared his body before me, looking at me steadily, and after a pause said:

"Gillicuddy, was I no' a guid man to her? "

"That ye aye were," I answered, and I spoke but the truth when I said it.

"Oh, Gillicuddy," said he, and this time his voice was piteous and pathetic, and a great sob shook his frame, "I loved that woman, she was a' there was in life to me, and oh, Gillicuddy, I think my heart is breakin'." Then he sat down on the edge of my bed and buried his face in his hands, and sobbed aloud with a great and uncontrollable passion of grief.

I did not know what to say, there was a sacredness in his great grief; a noble, strong man sat there in the night's silence, and his sole companion was the spirit of sorrow.

At last, when I could swallow the lump in



my throat and steady my voice, I spoke, and I felt like one who has intruded into the hallowed place of the heart's sanctuary. "Good master, be a man; ye hae suffered sairly, but God has given his promise to those that sorrow and are weary laden."

He started up in a mood changed and sudden, and an ugly glance was in his face and an angry sneer was in his tone. "And tell me, Gillicuddy, where is this God that promises so muckle? I canna find him."

"'Deed, dear master," said I, "ye should find him in yer heart."

"Weel, he's no' there," he cried out harshly; "he's but an absentee God, and I think there be no other thing but hell and the deil aye chucklin' in his sleeve."

Then he seemed to utter a sound like a laugh, and there was a weird, uncanny tone in it that made me tremble with dread.

"Oh, my dear man," said I, "I hinna the heart to gainsay that ye hae suffered sair, or to vex ye wi' ony word o' mine spoken thoughtlessly, but ye do a great discredit to yer manhood, and do but cast reproach on God's greatness when ye lose faith in the wisdom and goodness o' his providences. Oh, my Laird, God kens a' things, and orders a'



things, and his hand will fashion a' things aright."

He laughed outright, and I think I never heard such a wicked and sneering laugh. It sounded in my ears like the laugh of Satan himself, and the fierce, scoffing cruelty of it was terrible to hear. I looked up at him in terror to see him fallen so sadly from the condition of his own true, gentle self. His face was transformed, and the features that had been so manly and kind were drawn into hard and harsh lines, and I thought, as he stood before me in the dim, yellow light of the moon, that I had never seen so cruel a face. While I was yet trembling with dread, and with the echo of his mocking yet in my ear, he turned and clutched me by the shoulder, and I felt his fingers pressing hard on my flesh like iron.

"Listen to me, Gillicuddy," he hissed, "I hae a long journey before me, and nae time to waste. Ye maun get me off to Abbeyfont the nicht, for I'm thinking there may be a lugger lying in the Bay o' Killochan that for a price wad tak' me to France."

I was astonished beyond measure at his words, as one may well conceive, for he was in no state of mind to be left to himself, nor



yet to begin a journey. I was of a strong mind to remonstrate with him as a bounden duty, but I dreaded sorely to make a bad matter worse, and feared to interfere, seeing the terrible mood he was in, and having, as well, in mind his words of threatening of two days before; so I arose, and by dint of industry, and yet scarce knowing what I did, had all things completed within an hour's space, and the two of us took saddle in the night for Abbeyfont, and the pace we took fairly put me to my mettle to keep my seat on the nag I bestrode, while the Laird just flew before me in the dark like a madman.

It was in the very early morning hours when our horses' hoofs clattered upon the quiet streets of Abbeyfont. There we drew rein and aroused the landlord at Abbeyfont's principal hostelry, and making inquiry concerning the sea-craft lying in the bay, we found that the *Mary Morris*, Captain McFadden, would sail at sunrise. Down at the quays we found the captain, and after a short converse with him, my master had made arrangements to be taken aboard. Already there came to us over the waters of the Killochan, the voices of the sailors singing at the capstan, and the lights of the *Mary Morris*



were dimly blinking a furlong's length out from the shore.

You may be sure I had been busy wondering at this hasty journey of my master's. That he had found some clew to the secret of my Lady's whereabouts, I had a ready conjecture, but I was inclined to dismiss it as but little within likelihood. My conclusion was finally that the whole matter was best explained by my master's restless spirit, and his discontent at biding quiet when the excitement of travel and search might give him some relief from his anxiety and uneasiness.

I confess I found it quite beyond my powers to restrain divers remarks by which I sought in a roundabout way to get at my master's plans, but he was not to be entrapped into any reply that gave me one whit of satisfaction, so I gave up further attempt till the moment when the Laird was about to board the lugger and had a grip of my hand in farewell, when I made one last effort, and asked in desperation:

"And where might ye be off to, my Laird?"

"To hell," said he, with a wicked laugh.

"And when will ye be back?" were my next words.



He never answered me a word, but turned and stepped into the small boat that was waiting at the quay to carry him out to the lugger. The next moment the oars were dipping to the water, and my master's face was turned to the sea. As I stood looking after him, the day began to dawn, and in its gray light I watched the *Mary Morris* hoist sail and glide away through the mists of the morning, and with a heavy heart and a mind confused with anxieties I turned my face to Glenhaugh without breaking fast, leading my master's horse with empty saddle, at my side.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REPAIRING OF THE WEST TOWER.

It was a time of great confusion and excitement in France when my master left us, and I knew not but his journey would be one of great hazard and peril. We had gotten in our land, from time to time, account of the doings there which showed us plainly that evil was brewing, and that the government would likely be sorely put to in maintaining its authority. Since the French King, Louis XVI., had convened the Assembly, and brought together the three estates, there had been such a stirring up of all matters political, that no man might prophesy what the end would be, but when we had gotten news of the fall of the Bastile, with all the terrible commotion in which Paris found itself the day after, indeed it needed no prophet to foretell far worse to follow. Rumors were brought to us every day of the woeful things that were coming to pass, and every emigrant was telling a story of anarchy and violence. It was a



time when no man was safe in Paris, the mob being masters of the city, the Assembly being at its wits' end, and poor Louis, the king, just biting his finger nails in a dilemma, sorely disturbed because his subjects would not behave themselves and leave him to mend locks in peace and quiet.

With all this in view, and my master demented with his troubles, starting off on an unknown errand, there was no wonder that I was in a worry of mind like to bring me down with a fit of sickness, and all this following upon the evil days we had come through since my Lady's disappearance. Foreby the great weight of responsibility fallen upon me, now my master was away, was like to turn my brain, and make me rue the day I had ever set foot in Glenhaugh.

As I rode home from Abbeyfont that morning after I had seen the lugger lost in the mist, I had time to think of all these matters, and what with these on my mind, and a termagant mare with a gall on her withers beneath me, not to speak of an empty stomach, I was a sour and wretched man when I got back to Glenhaugh. Now that my master was gone, and I was left alone, you may be sure that a trust was mine that would claim all my best



efforts, and so I set myself to maintain with dignity and shrewdness my office of stewardship, and be ready to give a good account of it on my master's return.

Before my master's troubles began, that is to say, before the day when he left us to travel to Stirling on the matter of business I have related, he had counseled with me about certain repairs to Glenhaugh House that called for prompt attention, and we had settled it that on his return the work should be gone at without delay. In the confusion of our life that followed that time, no thought had been given again to the matter; it being dwarfed so completely by the harassing circumstances that had arisen about us. The work in question was no other than the repair of the West Tower of Glenhaugh, that part of the house having fallen seriously into ill condition. This tower was one of four, there being at each corner of the house a tower arising from the ground, and standing out from the main building. The West Tower was, I think, of greater age than any part of the house, being built, I believe, in or about the reign of James IV. It was adjacent to the Laird's apartments, indeed the inner wall formed the east side of the very apartment once occupied by



my Lady. We had observed that a long seam or crack in the masonry had become visible in my Lady's room, threatening to do serious damage if not attended to, and indeed the sag of the wall was so great that a large oak cabinet set in my Lady's room had suffered such a strain from it that a perceptible crevice was beginning to yawn between the wall and the cabinet, and I had heard my Lady, herself, make complaint that not a few of her trinkets and papers had slipped into the aperture and defied recovery.

My master had been away a month when I took it into my head to go forward with the repairing of the tower, the need being urgent and all things at hand prepared for it, and so it was that we were soon in the midst of it all and tearing away the stones to make room for the repairing of the building. In the course of the work we came upon an old recess or opening back of the oaken cabinet, that I have said was built into the wall of my Lady's room, a recess that had long ago been occupied, I doubt not, by a wide chimney flue, which in course of time had fallen into disuse, and become entirely obliterated by the addition of the West Tower, built by some laird of a later day, who had closed up the recess,



leaving strangely enough an entire waste of space.

When we had cut into this open space we found it more like the shaft of a mine, or a well, than any other thing, and looking down into it, nothing could we discern but darkness like that of Egypt. Indeed I well remember the words of Sawney McBride, one of the stone masons, as he leaned over, glowering into the black hole:

“I’d no’ say,” said he, “but we’ll a’ be crackin’ wi’ the deil afore lang, for I just think this be the hole that gangs into hell.”

We sent a man down by means of a rope fastened about his body to explore the depth and the darkness. It was Tam Jamieson, a worthless beggar living nearby, and who was helping to do the heavy work for the stone masons. He took a candle with him, but it went out after he had been down a short while, and he was long in giving us the signal to draw him up, so that Sawney McBride called down to him: “Wad ye like yer bed sent down to ye, Tammy?” When he was gotten back amongst us, he reported that the hole went no further than the ground floor, and was as clean and dry as could well



be, and but for a bit soot and ashes, and a smell like an old fireplace, he found naught uncommon.

I dwell upon this matter for this space for the reason that out of it grew some strange happenings that were not long in coming to pass, and though at this time I paid small heed to such matters, dismissing them for more pressing business, yet out of them arose serious results, as I have yet to tell.

This same Tam Jamieson that I have named, was a "ne'er do weel" who was born in our part of the country and reared among us. He was ever a most unconscionable liar, and well known to have ever a tarry fist, as we say of one given to small theft, and if he had brought out of that old chimney-hole a pot of gold buried by some of the old Lairds of Glenhaugh or had found aught of value there, no man would have been the wiser or had profit by it. However, he brought nothing up out of the secret depths that he showed to us, except a face begrimed with soot, and a pair of blackamoor hands gotten in his groping at the bottom in the black ashes, and indeed when we pulled him out with the rope, all hands crying "Heave ho!" it was Sawney McBride that cried: "God help us, did I no'



say this was the road to hell, and here is the muckle black deevil, himsel'."

If Tam Jamieson bore an ill repute among us, it was no worse than "Auld Tibbie," his mother, had earned, and indeed if it were not that she and her son had a hand in our later troubles at Glenhaugh, little need would there be to dwell upon such an ill-reputed couple.

Both Tibbie and her son lived up the glen back of Glenhaugh, a long league from the habitation of man, and near to St. Cuthbert's Cairn, a great heap of stones piled there to mark the spot where tradition had it that long since a monk had been martyred and buried. Among the common people of our part of the country Tibbie had been given a great reputation as a witch. Many a story was told of her power with the spirits of darkness, and there were folk, even of good repute, that could sit a long winter night and tell tales of Tibbie and her craft that were both marvelous and fearsome.

If I had the skill to describe her, it would be the picture of a fearsome woman I would draw, for she had a wrinkled face of the color of leather, and her eyes were sunk into her head, so that they did glitter there like the eyes of a reptile more than a human crea-



ture's. Her nose was aye threatening her chin, and foreby, the corners of her mouth were drawn down till they lost themselves in the very cords of her neck. Not alone in face and feature was Tibbie a woman to affright one, but as well was she twisted out of shape of body, being bent double so that her spine was just a bow, and she walked with a short stick in one hand, and the other hand was forever behind her, pressed upon her hip, and the elbow of her arm cocked out behind, which indeed made her to be a very crooked-looking old wife. All the bairns in the neighborhood ran at the sight of her, and indeed there were more than bairns that were fain to keep from crossing her path, these mainly being in terror of her ill tongue, for she had ever some wicked thing to say, and the common folk dreaded the evil that she might bring upon them.

It was the next day after we had drawn Tammy out of the hole that the head mason went down to examine the foundation of the wall, and when he was gotten up again, he brought back some of my Lady's small belongings, which he said must have fallen behind the cabinet and slipped through the broken wall. Among the handful of such



small matters, he brought back a wreath of withered flowers that had hung over the cabinet on the day of my master's return from Stirling. I got a great start, you may well conceive, at sight of it, for it recalled that evil day when my Lady had left us. It was as if I heard a voice speaking to me from the grave. Ah, but I trembled when I held it in my hand. The touch of it conjured up all the memories of our sad tribulation, and all the mystery grew darker and more terrible as I looked upon its flowers faded and withered. As I held it, my eyes grew moist, and as it crumbled away in my hand and fell rustling to the floor, I could stand it no longer, but was fain to go to my room, there to let my tears fall, and as they fell, there was one sad cry in my heart that rose above all others, and it was: "My poor, poor master, God pity you!"



## CHAPTER V.

“ I’M BACK AT GLENHAUGH AS I LEFT.”

Two months after the Lady’s departure, Esther Ricalton, meeting me in the court, said:

“ Eh, man, but ye put me in mind o’ the auld steward, yer uncle.”

“ And a faithfu’ steward he was,” said I.

“ Aye,” said she. “ And a steward wi’ an unco’ short temper.”

“ ’Deed,” I answered, “ I dinna wonder at it.”

“ Yer uncle had ae great fault,” said she.

“ And what was that?” said I, “ for I hae nae doot that yer judgment o’ a man’s faults wad be baith valuable and conclusive.”

“ He was aye like to be a hard taskmaster,” she answered, “ and I think ye mind me o’ him in that o’ late.”

“ Weel, Esther,” I replied, “ I’m sair sorry to hear ye say that, for I ken I hae nae hardness o’ heart, nor the thought within me to domineer over ony o’ my fellows, but ye’ll



mayhap bear in mind that the Laird has given me a charge to keep, and foreby ye canna forget that a' we hae seen is well fitted to mak' a body just distracted wi' anxiety and fret, and if I seem cruel to ony, or over ready wi' a short word, it is because I'm sairly troubled for my master's welfare, and hae not only his estate on my hands, but his troubles on my heart."

"Ah! Maister Gillicuddy," she said, softened by my words, for I had spoken them humbly, feeling that I had received a just rebuke, "I think we may a' pardon yer wee faults, when we think o' the honest purposes ye hae; but ye maun just remember that a' o' the Laird's people in hoose and byre are just leal and true to the Laird, and bear sic a love to him that their hearts are sad and wae for a' the ills he has seen, and a saft word at times, and a word o' praise frae the steward wad, I'm thinkin', be like to sound sweet in the ears o' his people."

"I thank ye for yer words, Esther," said I, "and I'll try to profit by them, but 'deed I wish my Laird were safe at hame, and I had a heavy load aff my mind."

"When look ye for the Laird?" she asked.

"'Deed," said I, "there's nae telling o' it."





“YE’LL MAYHAP BEAR IN MIND THAT THE LAIRD HAS GIVEN ME A  
CHARGE TO KEEP.”







Since he left Glenhaugh no word hae I heard o' him, and what wi' the story they tell o' affairs in France, and the terrible blood-spilling in the streets o' Paris, it's no' a prospect o' certainty we can look forward to. I hear that the streets o' Paris are filled wi' riot and bloodshed, and that nae man is safe there."

"Aye," she said, "I hae heard something o' it, but what sudden ca' had the Laird to gang aff to France at sic a time? What was it that took the Laird in sic muckle haste to travel there, I wonder?"

"It's sma' satisfaction o' answer ye'll get frae me on that matter," I answered, "for I've dwelt mony an hour on the mystery o' it mysel', and lost mony an hour's sleep just troubling my mind wi' it. I hae but this to say, and I think there be nae mair to say o' it, that the Laird being near demented and no' able to rest wi' the trouble he had, was just wrought up to sic a pitch o' nervous strain, that nae thing wad satisfy him but to be aye stirring, and so there was nae rest wi' him, but he maun up in the nicht and aff to France wi' nae mair object in view than to obey an irresistible desire to be aye moving and searching, even if he had little hope o' finding, though indeed I hae sometimes



thought that some paper or packet might hae fallen into his hands that sent him awa' in sic haste."

"Aye, but it's strange things hae come to Glenhaugh," she said, "and after a' is said and done, in the name o' God what's become o' the Lady? Whar can she be, and what is her story? Is she deid, think ye?"

"Deid," said I, "and what else? O' a surety, deid is my Lady, and nae other answer is there, but in what manner and in what place no man can say, and it is my belief that the mystery o' it is past a' search, and we may e'en no trouble oursels mair o' the deid, but bow doon before God in humility and do the best we can wi' the living."

"There be sma' reason to doot yer words," said she with a sigh, "but oh, man, it's a strange and awfu' thing that has fallen on Glenhaugh, and tak' my word, Maister Gillicuddy, we hinna seen the end o' it, and evil days are yet to come to the Laird o' Glenhaugh when he comes back to sit i' the shadow o' the black cloud that is over him,"

"God's will be done," I said sadly; "we are in his hands, Esther, my lass, but the voice o' my faith bids me say: 'Trust in the Lord; be o' guid cheer.'"



As I turned to go from Esther with the words upon my lips and a tear in my eye, I saw her put her apron to her face, and I saw that she was weeping. Before I had taken three steps she called after me:

"Maister Gillicuddy, ye'll just pardon me for ony ill thing I may hae said to ye. Yer just grand beside yer uncle. Deil tak' the auld crab!"

As I went down the court I could not restrain a bit laugh at Esther's words, but the passing joy of it was like the light of a star gleaming for a moment in the vault of midnight.

Another month had passed and still I heard no word of my master. I had learned, as the time went on, terrible rumors of the doings in France, and knew not what to think of my master's welfare if he still continued there. I had gotten news of the bloody and cruel mobs and the havoc and riot that disturbed all people there, and there had come the news that a great concourse of mad folk had marched from Paris to Versailles and among woeful deeds had insulted the King, and carried him with dreadful circumstances back to Paris and imprisoned him there.

With all these tales of fearful occurrences



that were said to be of daily happening, with far more terrible things that it was said were like to happen, I was gravely disturbed, for not a scrape of a pen had the Laird sent me; at least never a word from him had reached us at Glenhaugh, and we were just getting to think that the Laird's absence was wrapped in much the same mystery as my Lady's.

I think it was in the later days of November, for I call to mind that the nights were frosty, and the winds were rustling in the haystacks and the leaves were sweeping into the hollows, that I sat at my table after the cares of a hard day and was pondering the future, wondering what in God's mysterious providence it held for us all, when I heard a footfall outside of my door. It was late, and as my room was at the top of the house, being in one of the towers and rarely frequented, I was the more quick to take note of it and to wonder who wandered there. I listened and heard it again close by my door. I got up and opened the door wide, holding the candle before me. Its light shot out into the dark landing at the head of the stair, and there before me stood a tall man in a garb that was not common in our parts, being more after



the manner of the French costume. He wore upon his head a chapeau, such as the French gentlemen of quality wear, and his long plum-colored coat with its overlapping cape was buttoned over his breast. About his neck there was a white embroidered cravat, worn high and close to the chin, so that he looked like a courtier of Louis' Court at Versailles. For the rest of his habit, which I unconsciously saw, for I was surprised beyond measure at such a strange intrusion, he wore his hair brushed back and tied with a bow, and his feet were in long topboots. As he stood in the uncertain light which my candle flashed into the shadowy landing, all of his appearance was that of a stranger come from a journey, a man foreign to me in every way, but especially strange and unknown to me was he in face and feature as I could dimly discern. A tall man he was and a haggard, dark and somber of face, with hollow cheeks and sunken eyes gleaming wild and frowning under his brows. There was a hard, cold smile upon his lips, and I could not help thinking he was a man determined and cruel of heart, and I stared at him with not surprise alone but with trembling and fright. As I stared, holding the candle before me, he advanced boldly and



I stepped back into my room, muttering some confused words of courteous import. Before I could finish my sentence he spoke, reaching forth his hand to me, and I would have fallen to my knees with weakness had I not leaned back on the wall for support, as I heard his voice:

“Weel, Gillicuddy, and is yer master so changed that ye greet him as a stranger? I had nae gotten back to Glenhaugh so safely, my man, wi’ these French clothes that so sairly puzzled ye, but for a bit o’ the hand-writing o’ the Count Mirabeau.”

It was the Laird’s voice of a verity, and here was my master before me, back to his own house of Glenhaugh.

I looked keenly into his face, and it was my kind Laird of Glenhaugh I looked at. I put forth my hands and trembling with emotion said:

“I welcome ye back wi’ a’ my heart; but oh, man, ye are changed in more than dress. Ye hae seen trouble since I saw ye.”

“Aye, Gillicuddy,” said he, “and I hae a mind to think I’ll never see aught but trouble again.”

“Then,” said I, “ye hae heard nae guid news o’ my Lady?” I said this feeling that





AS I STARED, HOLDING THE CANDLE BEFORE ME, HE ADVANCED  
BOLDLY.







already my question had been answered in the terrible traces of suffering upon him.

His eyes glared at me with a wild look, and his mouth had a sullen and harsh expression as though my inquiry irritated him, and he showed plainly he was determined to keep his own counsel and speak no more of his trouble.

"We'll say nae mair o' the past," said he, "but this I will say: there's naught but terror and bloodshed in France, and a' men are mad wi' the sight o' it. There has been great wrang done, and they wha do wrang maun abide their punishment; but, Gillicuddy, I will tell ye ae thing that ye'll do weel to mind: I'm no' to be questioned. The past doesna sit weel on my stomach. I've naught to tell, and ye see I'm back at Glenhaugh as I left."

That was a strange answer, I thought. I would fain have followed up my questions, but I had a great dread upon me that my master's mind was unsettled by his troubles, and that to press him more closely would do but serious harm. I feared him now, as well, for his look was that of a man not to be trifled with, and he was that nervous and excitable I could see that a small matter would cause him to do some desperate act of rashness. I saw that he had come back a wreck of his former



self, and I did not wonder that he dreaded to have the past kept before him, so I left the matter as I found it, and made a resolve to stand between my master and all people who might seek to probe into his troubles and renew the pains that he had borne.

I saw my master safely bestowed and bade him good-night, and the old life of every-day things began again at Glenhaugh, but it was a feverish and unnatural existence; for the Laird was sullen and silent and never resting, a man unhappy and uncompanionable, having no traffic with any man and shut up in the prison of his own broodings, looking out on the world, frowning and distrustful as one embittered at life.



## CHAPTER VI.

“WHAT O’ THOSE WHA HAE DONE A GREAT  
WRANG?”

WHAT would be the outcome of this feverish, unhappy life we were leading at Glenhaugh I could not tell, but I feared it as the mariner fears the roar of the breakers on an unknown coast.

Whatever thing had come to my master, whether in France, or grown out of the torture his mind had suffered, he was a man in all ways changed, and as sour and disagreeable a man as ever drew breath. Little interest did he take in the affairs of his house, and sat the most of his time with an ugly frown on his haggard face, brooding alone over his troubles. He would hardly give one of us a civil answer, and if I approached him, he scowled upon me as an intruder, and gave speech to me in a manner that was ungrateful and cruel. He seemed to be ever watching us all through the corner of his eye when



we came into his presence, and indeed he reminded me more of a savage animal driven into toils, than a Christian creature.

Not only had he grown sour to his own household, but inhospitable and forbidding to his friends, and stubbornly refused to meet them, so that those who came to see him had to leave as they came, wondering at his grievous disregard of them. At last the whisper began to go about that the Laird of Glenhaugh had gone daft, and indeed I was of the same belief myself, for no sane man could have looked upon life and God's creatures as he did, nor could any man having the grace of God within him have uttered the blasphemy his lips gave utterance to.

I think it was barely a fortnight had passed since my master's return, but that fortnight was like to a far greater space of time, when Geordie Gillespie, one of the house servants and ever a meddlesome body, came to me late in the afternoon of a dull, cold day, and said:

"It's little pride the Laird has, by George, and he's no' vera choice o' his company."

"And what company o' ill-repute keeps he?" said I. "Has he taken ye into his bosom?"

"'Deed no, but he micht do maur," re-



plied Geordie. "What think ye o' auld Tibbie for a friend o' the Laird's?"

"Ye speak in riddles," said I. "What mean ye?"

"That the Laird and Tibbie are great thegither," said he.

"Geordie," said I, "if ye hae ony sense to speak, oot wi' it and dinna blether."

"By George," said he, and that was always his favorite word, "I hae this to say, that auld Tibbie was at Glenhaugh the day, and had the ear o' the Laird, and it wasna half an hour after, that the Laird just followed her, and I saw the baith o' them meet at the burn and gang up the glen thegither. I maun hae yer word, Maister Gillicuddy, that ye'll no' let on if I tell ye the rest o' my story."

"Ye may trust me," I said, and I waited eagerly to hear what further he had to tell.

"I'll hud ye to yer word," he said. "Weel, I was so curious to learn mair that I just followed up the glen and saw my Laird gang into auld Tibbie's hoose. I wondered what he gaed there for, so I just crept up to the window at the end o' the hoose and peeped in. There was the Laird wi' a paper in his hand, and as he held it, I could see it tremble in his grip, while his face was as white



as his shirt, and Tibbie was leanin' on her staff and glowerin' at him. It was plain the twa had some secret between them, and that the Laird was in the power o' her, but I feared to be caught at eavesdroppin', and just stepped quickly awa', and here I am. But, Maister Gillicuddy, the Laird's pride is sairly fallen when he sits at the fireside o' sic a body as auld Tibbie Jamieson and traffics wi' her so far as to be in fear o' her."

I was astonished to hear Geordie's words and puzzled to understand what they implied, but I was shrewd enough to hide my astonishment and so I said:

"It's little ye had to do, Geordie, when ye played the spy on the Laird. Can the Laird no' do an act o' kindness to a puir auld body without some meddler to question it and mak' a clash o' it? Ye'll do weel to mind yer ain business, my man, and hud yer tongue, or ye may get a lesson frae the Laird ye'll no' forget, for he's an ugly man to cross, and as for my Laird's turnin' pale at aught that Tibbie can say or do or show, there's nae truth in it, and I think it was naught but yer ain pale face ye saw reflected in the glass when ye pit yer nose against it."

"Weel," said Geordie, "what I did was



but the interest o' a frien o' the Laird's, and I hae a great pride in the name o' Glenhaugh, and it wasna in ony spirit o' idle curiosity I followed the Laird, but ye'll no' say a word o' it lest it michtna be so easy to convince him o' my feelin' in the matter; so, Maister Gillicuddy, ye'll no' forget yer promise to me, and mum's the word."

That same afternoon I saw the Laird from my window coming across the fields from the direction of the glen, and though it was late, and the darkness of evening thickening, yet I could see that he walked slowly, and that his head was bent down like a man thinking. I did not see him enter the house, but I heard his step during the evening in his own rooms as I passed by on my way through the halls.

At ten o'clock at night, as I was on my way again by his door, having a duty in that part of the house, I heard him still in his room, and he was pacing the floor, I knew, in some great agitation, for the sound of his step was plainly an indication of a change that had taken place in him to make him more restless than usual. I had gotten but a pace away, and was thinking with sore distress what terrible strain he was under, when his door opened and his voice startled me.



“Is that ye, Gillicuddy?”

“Aye,” I answered, turning, “is it ony-thing ye need?”

“Gillicuddy,” he said, “I hae need o’ muckle,” and as he said it, I noticed that his voice was low and subdued, and a tone of inexpressible sadness and weariness was in it, so unlike the sharp, embittered accents we had heard from him since his return from France.

“Come in, man,” he said, “shut the door behind ye; I hae something to say to ye.”

As I entered, he turned from the fireplace where he stood, and I saw a flare of light flash up from the coals where torn fragments of paper flickered and curled. When I had closed the door behind me, I stood waiting for him to speak. After standing a moment or two gazing at the dying flame, he turned toward me and taking three steps stood before me in silence, and I was at a great loss to know what to expect.

I noticed that his face was drawn into an expression of the most painful agony of mind, and that his eyes had a wild, vacant stare as of one whose very soul is affrighted with some terrible thought. Not a word did he say, but stood in the middle



of the room, nervously clutching a fragment of paper, the last remnant of that which was turning to ashes on the coals. His head was thrown back, so that I could see the whites of his eyes gleaming with an unnatural light, and he never stopped biting his under lip in a ceaseless and wild agitation. At last with a great start and a twitch of every feature, he seemed to recollect something, or to suddenly come to a purpose to speak:

"Gillicuddy," said he, and his voice was deliberate and solemn past all description, "there be a question o' Scripture that I hae been pondering o'er, and I maun hae yer answer to it. It is this: 'If a man die, shall he live again?' "

I was beside myself with fear of him when he said it, but I answered with as much composure as I was master of:

"I'm thinkin' there's nae death, my master, but that it will a' be a matter o' change, and that a man will o' a verity live again."

He stared at me intently, and with his twitching features at rest while I spoke, as though his peace of mind depended on my answer.

"And tell me, Gillicuddy," he asked, still with the same intense deliberation and solem-



nity; "what o' those wha hae done a great wrang here, and canna right it, though they sairly rue it and hae a great yearning. Can they mak' recompense in another world, think ye?" He bent forward like one who waited to hear the prophecy of an oracle, to hear my answer.

"'Deed," said I, "a' things are in God's hands, and he will surely repay for every wrang thing, but he is a gracious Master as weel, and will gie free pardon to the contrite."

"Then God pardon me, and hae mercy on me," he cried piteously, and at that he sank into the chair beside him like a man bereft of all energy, limp and wearily, and I thought he would sink to the floor. Then he gave forth a sound, pitiful and agonizing, and it grew into a heart-rending cry of grief, like the wail of one engulfed in overwhelming despair.

I made a step forward to put my hand upon him and say the words of comfort and kindness that were eloquent in my heart, but he rose to his feet with a great energy, and his eyes shining like balls of fire, and a look of horror on his face dreadful to see. For a moment he stood rigid and motionless like a statue of stone, then throwing his arms forward with a gesture of one who would shut



out some terrible sight, and with a shudder of the most intense horror and dismay he uttered a wild shriek frenzied and shrill, that echoed through the stillness of the night, and was like to curdle the very blood, and down he fell prone upon his face in a deadly swoon.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE WORDS OF A WITCH.

I KNOW not how I aroused the house, and cannot relate the events that followed during all the rest of that unhappy night, but leaving these things to be imagined, it is enough to say that the morning saw my master lying as one dead, and the good Dr. Smilie, from Abbeyfont, at his bedside, telling us with a serious face that the Laird was at the point of death, and naught but a miracle of God's providence, and a bit of his own medical skill, could bring him back to life.

There were long days now, weary watches and anxious hopes, for my master lay dead to the world, and the doctor and his colleagues—for he had brought into the case two skilled practitioners from Abbeyfont—could give no positive assurances that he would ever arise, but shook their heads and pondered.

At last came Dr. Smilie to me, and said: "Master Gillicuddy, I think the Laird will live."



“Thank God for the news ye bring me,” I answered fervently, for I loved my master loyally and his welfare was ever my sincere and constant thought.

“His mind has suffered a severe strain,” continued the good doctor, “and as a man o’ your learning kens, Master Gillicuddy, there are cases where such a strain leaves sad and deplorable ruin.”

“God forbid,” said I, “that my guid Laird should ever rise frae his bed bereft o’ the greatest o’ God’s blessings, his reason.”

“The result will be as God wills,” he answered, “but even at the best I fear that his mind can never again be trusted to stand a serious trial. He must be nursed back to health wi’ the utmost care, and sorrow and perplexity must be kept frae him.”

I listened to Dr. Smilie, and grasping his hand clasped it warmly and thankfully, and promised to guard my master in all ways from the perplexities of life and the memories of the unfortunate and cruel past.

The Laird grew stronger and better day by day, and at last he moved about among us again, the Laird of Glenhaugh, in his usual way, though far, far away and changed from the Laird that we had once known. He now



spoke but little, seeming to be aye thinking or trying to think of something, and keeping much of his thought to himself. I could not but think that he was still concealing some deep feeling within, for there was a pathetic look in his eyes that was pitiful to see, and just gave me the tenderest feelings for him when I looked into his face. With me he was ever the same, with never a sour look or hard word, and though he came often to me and we talked of many things, yet he never spoke of my Lady, and in truth I never spoke to him nor yet put forth any word that could cunningly cause him to speak of her or his troubles. I saw that if he had aught to say, he would say it, and I was too true a friend of his to try to probe into the wound he had, and add further to his pains.

That Tibbie Jamieson had given my master some mysterious message I was prone to think, and I shrewdly determined to have an eye to her, and to get at the bottom of the matter in a roundabout way in the course of time, but it was long before I met her on the road, and when I did, she forbade my approach, scowling at me and muttering curses and shaking her staff at me in a most spiteful temper.



During these days my master spent most of his time in wandering over the fields and about his own lands. As he grew stronger, the habit increased upon him and was continued, so that he would be away hours at a time, having climbed the hills back of Glenhaugh and penetrated to the heart of the glen it might be, but I do not think he ever entered Tibbie's cot or held converse with her at any time. Sometimes he wandered down to the shores of the Killochan Bay to sit and watch the waves rolling in and hear their gurgling among the stones, but wherever he went, he was ever the same, a man aimless and hopeless, or if a purpose was his, it was to wait only, and let the days go by to fulfill the appointed period of life.

Since that terrible night when my master had spoken to me of his Lady, and had closed his lips with the frenzied blasphemy of his despair, and had set off for France, which was many months gone, he had never spoken to me a word that bore upon these woeful things of the past, nor had his wife's name ever again passed his lips. I had come to feel that time, with its softening influences, had brought to him a fair measure of reconciliation to the decrees of destiny, and that at last his mind was



recovering from the cruel shock it had suffered.

Thus day succeeded day, and the months went by, and while life with its duties was active among us and all things moved onward under the spur of ambition and hope, yet there, always in our midst, was the good master of Glenhaugh, a living dead man, a man who had long ago finished his course, and dwelt among us as one who had died and come back to us as only the shadow of a man.

The spring was well advanced, when I heard that Tam Jamieson had left our part of the country, and no man knew where he had wandered, but he was ever a bird of migration, and little heed was taken of his going. Later I had taken a supply of victualing, according to an old habit, to Tibbie at the head of the glen, and in answer to my questions as to her son's whereabouts, the crusty old crone had replied to me curtly enough that "A fule was aye askin' questions."

I think Tibbie was the most ungracious and ungrateful old besom man had ever met. Her impudence was just past all patience, and when she gave me such an uncivil answer, and that after I had walked a half league with two stone weight of provender on my shoulders,



and laid it cheerily at her door, I was to be pardoned for losing my temper and saying:

“Weel, Tibbie, ye’re just a sour auld rip, and I can but think that for a truth the deevil is your maister as a’ folks say.”

She turned on me, trembling with rage, and shook her stick at me. Her eyes were glittering deep in their sunken sockets, and she hissed in her quavering voice:

“Curse ye, ye gowk, I spit on ye,” and her face was just horrible to see as her nose and chin came together, and again and again she spat upon the ground with a vehemence awful to witness.

“Aye, but ye hae a bad tongue, ye wicked auld body,” I said, looking back at the door, and fain to get away from her.

She hobbled toward me still muttering, and I paused at her words, harsh and uncanny:

“Think ye the deil be my master i’ faith, and for why no’? Ca’ my Lady o’ Glenhaugh, she o’ the proud face, and bid her say wha kens her story. Aye, there maun be truth in what a’ folks say, and ye were best no’ cross me, ye silly peesweep.”

I turned pale at the mention of my Lady. What could the wicked old hag know of my Lady or her secret story. I felt a chill like



death steal over me, and as I looked at the withered old creature before me, there was, awakening in my soul, a supernatural terror that set my teeth to chattering, but I found voice to say: "And what ken ye o' my Lady? There's a green sod above her, and her story lies buried wi' her."

The eyes of the old beldame blinked at me, and sent out a glance of meaning that was fearsome and secret, and yet I thought there was a kind of glee in it, and on her twitching face the semblance of a knowing smile drew her features into a horrible grimace.

"There's mony a cauld corpse that wanders frae its grave," she said, and as she spoke there was an unholy atmosphere about her that wrought upon me, and I could feel a terror creeping upon me. She bent forward, advancing toward me, and pointed her bony finger at me, which shook in its palsied infirmity.

I was fairly beside myself with fear of her, and yet I mind I sneered at her words, and this was the worst I could have done, for it wrought her into an unseemly rage, so that in a fearful state of mind I turned and made away from her as from the presence of the Evil One, but the curses she let fall upon me



rang in my ears till I was at Glenhaugh door, and the fright of it did not leave me for many a day.

Tibbie had said enough to mean that she was possessed of something of my Lady's story, but I put that aside as a thing of her fancy, or quite as like to be a boast without foundation, set forth to put a bolster to her reputation for supernatural endowments. It was ever death or dead men with her, or witches and warlocks, brownies and bogles, not to speak of paddocks and hoolets, and the deil among them in all shapes. That she brought my Lady into her claver, and spoke of corpses wandering with their secrets from the grave, was, I felt sure, of no more moment or significance than that it was a secret and awful matter, and one which would appeal to me with especial force.

After all my thinking over these things I arrived at the conclusion that I would get more peace of mind by letting the matter drop and dwelling no more upon it, but with all my concluding, and the conviction that Tibbie was nothing more than a miserable old woman, crooked in mind and body, and bewitched with the devils of ignorance and superstition, yet I could not shake



off a certain fear I had of her, and a vague presentiment that there was a strange power about her that extended over our lives and destinies.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### “THE LAIRD’S GANE DAFT.”

I HAD been at Abbeyfont on the Laird’s business for a week and returned on foot, getting to Glenhaugh late in the evening. When I had come as far as the gateway I met Geordie Gillespie standing there alone by the side of one of the gateposts. When I drew near, I could see that something was amiss, and my heart came into my mouth as he ran out into the road toward me.

“Eh, man, there’s been a terrible thing happened up at the hoose,” he said in an awful whisper, clutching me by the arm.

“In God’s name,” I cried, “what thing has happened?”

He put his mouth close to my ear and said hoarsely, “The Laird’s gane daft.”

“What mean ye, man,” said I, pushing him from me, and my heart fairly stopped in its beating. “Has aught o’ ill befallen him?”

“And if to gang daft is no’ an ill thing,” he returned, with a show of resentment at my



words, "then 'deed the maister's just in his or'ner and doin' fine."

"Hoots, ye silly body, and what o' my Laird?"

"Hearken," he said, coming nearer and glancing about in the dark as if he feared an uncanny visitor, "I'd no' say but auld Tibbie is at the bottom o' it."

"At the bottom o' what?" I demanded, beginning to lose patience. "Speak oot, man."

"At the bottom o' the Laird's awfu' daftness," he said with his face close to mine, and his long nose pointing at me.

I said no more to him than: "Curse ye for a gomeril," and hurried up the court and into the house, where I asked for the Laird.

He was not in the house, and none of the people knew where he was. I made diligent search within, and then went out to inquire further. The Laird had not been home for his dinner, but that was not an unusual thing, and no one within or without could tell of his whereabouts, though I made active inquiry, nor yet was there any unusual news of him among them.

I started out to find Geordie again, thinking I might get at the meaning of his words,





MY HEART CAME INTO MY MOUTH AS HE RAN OUT INTO THE  
ROAD TOWARD ME.







and learn something that was doubtless hidden in them, but a servant-lass told me that Geordie and another had gone to Dalquhar-ran to see an acquaintance who was lying at the point of death, so I was fain to content myself with waiting, in the hope that the Laird would be home before bedtime.

I went to my office in the West Tower, and sat down by the open window facing the Kil-lochan Bay, looking out across the court and the Abbeyfont highroad to the far vault of blue where the sky and water merged and melted in the darkness. It was a still night, still as death, and the sky was clear, with stars sharply glittering in the lift, and only a faint breath of wind coming gently in from the sea, carrying an odor of brine with it. By the light of the stars, for the moon had gone down an hour earlier, I could see the waves in long lines moving over the surface of the bay, and breaking in little crests of white as they rolled silently shoreward.

As I sat I heard the clock down the stair-way announce the hour of midnight, and then I heard steps coming along the court pavement. It was not so dark but that I could make out two figures approaching as I leaned out eagerly, and one of these was Geordie Gil-



lespie back from Dalquharran. Downstairs I went, and found him in the hall, but it was plain that he had seen more than a sick neighbor at the Clachan, and that the Clachan brew had fortified him against any evil spirits that might have haunted the long, lonely road home.

When I entered the hall he was trying to sing in a weak, maudlin key, an old song I had heard in our parts many a time, one verse running:

“ Na saddle tae me the white,” he said ;  
“ Na saddle tae me the brown,  
But saddle tae me the swiftest steed  
In a’ my stables roun’,  
For I will neither eat nor drink  
Till I bring my Lady hame.”

When he saw me he made a great obeisance, being quite gone in drink, and said: “ By George, Maister Gillicuddy, it’ll be fine for the Laird, the nicht, and he’ll be like to mak’ a guid nicht o’ it in the glen amang the warlocks there, but ’deed I saw nane o’ them the nicht mysel’, for the Dalquharran yill is a grand drink to gar them hud back.”

“ What ken ye o’ my Laird?” I asked.

“ Did he no’ tell ye, Maister Gillicuddy? Then belike he’s no gotten back frae the glen.”



"What mean ye, man, o' my master's being in the glen? The Laird wad be mad to wander i' the glen at sic a time o' nicht."

"Mad, say ye," he replied, and what with drink and his uncanny fancies, there was a wild, horrible earnestness in his tone, and his watery eyes stared at me, and his long nose seemed to wrinkle and sharpen, "mad, say ye; and wasna that what I said to ye lang syne when I met ye at the gate?"

"How ken ye my master is at the glen?" said I.

"I kenna that he be at the glen the nicht, but at the glen he has been, Maister Gillicuddy, a' when nichts ere this, for these een o' mine hae seen him," he replied, with a hic-cough at the last word.

"And was he there last nicht?" I asked.

"Aye, was he, and the nicht before that, and yet the nicht before that and mair foreby, by George, and it's a fact."

He came close to me with unsteady gait, and drawing his hand across his slavering mouth, balanced himself before me, and raised his unsteady forefinger to be impressive. He had drink enough souging in his head to make his speech thick and husky, but yet his brains were keener now than when he was



sober, and his speech was quite as terse and intelligible: "And let me say to ye, Maister Gillicuddy," he said, "that the Laird and auld Tibbie hae some fearsome business on hand, and the auld witch has cast her spell o' evil ower him."

His watery eyes blinked, and he cast upon me a look of maudlin wisdom as though he had laid before me the results of some deep cogitation and deserved well of me for his service. I stood in silence watching him as he turned away with a hiccough and left me, beginning again to tune up to the words:

"When my guid Laird cam' hame at e'en  
Enquiring for his Lady,  
Some did cry, and some made reply,  
'She's awa' wi' the gypsy laddie.'"

At the close of every line he gave a drunken hiccough and his quavering voice was far out of tune. But as he left me standing alone, there was the echo of that old rhyme he sung still running in my mind, and I found myself unconsciously repeating the words, and remembering other lines that I scarcely knew I had knowledge of.

I passed out into the great hall, and looked up the lonely dark stair. How often had I seen my Laird and his Lady coming down



that same stair in happier days. The words came to me as the song had them:

"She cam' tripping doon the stair,  
Her fair maids all aroun' her;  
As soon as they saw her weel-faured face,  
They cast their glamory ower her."

Had some glamour been cast o'er my Lady, indeed; and were my Laird and all of us bewitched with some cruel spell? Old Tibbie's fearsome presence seemed to come before me at the thought, and the clock, heavily measuring off the minutes in the dead stillness around me, I could almost fancy to be the sound of her step upon the stair, and that her bent and twisted figure might emerge out of the shadows that were around me.

I went out into the court and stood thinking. As I stood in the hush of the night with the stars above me and the dark old house behind me, silent and historic with the memories of generations of lairds and ladies clinging about it, I heard the clock on the great stair again strike out. It was the first hour of the morning, and as the sound started solemnly out of the stillness to die again in silence, the very air seemed to die out of the night, and an all-engulfing hush like an eternal death closed around me, oppressive and



appalling, when, like an echo from far away, came a sound stealing upon the breathless air, and the voice of one singing broke weirdly upon the stillness, and came down from the black shadow of the house. I could hear again the words of that same old rhyming song I had but now dismissed from my mind, as Geordie wandered with drunken steps up the winding tower stairs, singing in quavering tones, broken and maudlin, with frequent hiccoughs:

“ For I will neither eat nor drink  
Till I bring my Lady hame.”

There was a weird suggestion in the words again that recalled my long-lost Lady, and they sounded like words from far away, as they came down to me in the stillness of the night from the tower hanging black overhead.

I could not think of going back into the house and to sleep, so I wandered down into the road and looked up and down. Lonely enough looked the Abbeyfont road stretching away into darkness, but clear for two hundred yards under the lights of the stars. I stood leaning against one of the tall gateposts looking up the road in the direction of Pinlawn and Dalquharran, and it may have been but a space before the hour of two of the



morning when I thought I heard a footfall in the stillness. I waited and listened. Again I heard it. It was a step approaching from the Pinlawn way, and now I could hear its regular tramp along the highway, and I knew somebody was walking toward me. Soon I saw faintly emerging from the darkness a figure. It was dim and indistinct, but I could see it, and when a few more moments had passed I could make out the form of a man outlined against the starlit road behind him. He was walking along at a fair pace, and his solitary form upon the road at that time of night, and the startling tramp of his steps in the stillness, gave him a character the mystery of which made me cower as one in a fright, nor was my feeling the less that I could well prophesy who it was that was coming to me, and still I found myself trembling with strange emotion, when my master, the Laird, turning in at the gateway, strode up the approach to the house.

"And it'll be just a fine nicht for a dauner about the country, my Laird?" quoth I.

"Is that ye, Gillicuddy," said he, in his common way. "Aye, it's a bonny nicht, but we'll just gang in thegither, for I hae a wheen questions to ask o' ye."



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE VOICE OF A SPIRIT.

I FOLLOWED the Laird up the court, or rather it were more truth to say I walked side by side with him, for he had taken a grip of my arm in his warm, kindly way, and we two went, linking it together, to my master's room.

Not a word did he say for a good five minutes, but sat before me at the open window with the mystic faint light of the stars dimly showing me his features. At last he spoke.

"Gillicuddy, is it no' a bonny nicht?"

"That it is," said I, and I wondered at his words.

"Look oot, Gillicuddy, at the lift, and tell me is it no' a grand thing to see those countless bright stars glinting in this blue dome, and shining doon, through sic a vast o' space upon us?"

"Aye, my Laird," I said, "and I think nae man can look up at sic a grand spectacle wi'



reverence and awe in his soul, that is no' a child o' God, for when a man's nature is touched wi' sic things, it is but the touch of divinity, and the great Architect o' it a' is speaking unto him."

He paused for a little, leaning against the window, and then said:

"Aye, I hae sometimes sat and looked up at them till I maist thought I was getting nearer them. Aye, but there's a wheen o' them, and I hae thought that they may be just each o' them a pure soul that has gone before and aye waiting there for some soul that has-na yet left its earthly prison."

I was surprised at this saying of his, for it was far and away out of the manner of his expressed thoughts, which never in the months of his hopeless resignation to Fate's decree, had suggested sympathy with any condition of nature or circumstances. Here was the first clew to my master's hidden life, a momentary but certain glance into the depths within, and a whisper out of his soul that had sat with sealed lips through so many long days.

At last I knew that he thought my Lady dead and gone, and had still a gentle strain of old memories singing like the echoes



of a sweet song in his heart, and I thanked God for it devoutly.

“’Deed, my Laird,” I said, thinking to bring him back to more practical converse, for I oftentimes feared that some hallucination might possess him, “ye hae a thought that does ye credit; but, man, there’s a bonny earth that lies beneath the stars, and there’s mony a pure soul clad in the garment of flesh. God has given man the power to get glimpses of the sublime, for the purpose it maun be, I’m thinking, that he may just mak’ use of its influence in this every-day world o’ oors. For what use can the spiritual be if its holy and sublime whisperings be no’ to mak’ us happier and mair perfect here amang men. Ah, my Laird, the stars may e’en shine, as they hae shone for ages, but men are just o’ anither sphere, and may e’en bide their time beneath them, and there’s an end o’ it.”

“And ye think,” said he, listening to my words, “that the spiritual and the earthly are no’ in communication, do ye? Weel, a’ men hae different minds, and a’ knowledge is no’ given alike to men. Noo let me ask ye, what think ye o’ the deid? Can the deid come to life, think ye?”

I was startled by his question, and I began



to have a vague dread of my master's drift, feeling that his question was not one that should come from the lips of a man whose reason was either natural or wholesome.

"Can the deid come to life?" I said. "And that's a strange thing for a man o' yer sense and wisdom to ask. It canna be. There is nae resurrection o' the body in this mortal life, and there is little profit in asking such questions or in meddling wi' such mysteries."

He listened to me with a graciousness which was in keeping with his kindly nature, and yet I could see that he listened as one indulgent to another in error of opinion, and I thought I saw in his face an expression of something like triumphant superiority, as though he had some thought and belief that gave him confidence in his power to differ with me and refute me.

"Ah, Gillicuddy," he said, "do ye no' ken that unto some it is given to know the mysteries o' God mair than others? Man! ye hae never been touched wi the hand o' God; ye hae never known the grandest and the divinest love that man can know enter into yer heart and soul, and mak' ye just blest wi' the joy o' it. A love far too deep to breathe its



last wi' the breath o' life, a love stronger than death, a love that trembled wi' the exquisite sweetness and satisfaction o' its ain being. My God, Gillicuddy, ye ken naething o' it; o' the grace and purity and sincerity o' a great love for the loveliest and tenderest woman that was e'er made for man to worship and absorb into his whole nature; a woman that was life and love and hope to ye; that gave ye rest and peace and content, and made the sun and stars to shine for ye, and the fields to grow green for ye. Oh, Gillicuddy! what ken ye o' it? Wi' sic a love that comes to man, a man maun be changed, and being changed and let into the mystery and rapture o' it, he may weel feel and hear what other men never ken. What recks it that the grave has clasped its cauld arms aroond the body, it canna hold the spirit; but oh! would it no' be fine to get comfort frae its words? "

I had never heard my master speak of his heart's possessions before, for I knew that they were sacred to such a man, but now in the depth of his feeling he spoke, and with an earnestness which was pathetic and impressive beyond expression, and I bowed in spirit before the dignity of his theme, and felt in-



deed that I could not dare to approach this altar of his worship, sanctified as it was by the sacrifice of hope and happiness.

What a weirdly beautiful, aye sublime thought was in his soul! Ah, what yearning aspirations were his to rise to a spiritual companionship! Here was my master walking among us, and by his side a ghost, a deathless spirit ever his companion, to whom he spoke as to a living reality, straining his soul's ear to hear and interpret a voice that was audible to him alone. A watcher he was, as it were, in his lonely night-tower looking out for a star, a soul lifted up and bending its gaze to search the illimitable spaces of mystery to find the substance of a sweet and sacred memory.

As I sat thinking over the words he had spoken, and feeling deeply the power of them, he came back to the thread of our converse, and said:

“And, Gillicuddy, I would say to ye, that what are mysteries to some men are plain to others. So while the deid may no' come to life, and the body perisheth, yet the spirit lives wi' us. Aye, Gillicuddy, lives amang men, and mair than that, it comes as an individual to men and speaks to them, face to face, frae an invisible world.”



I was at a loss what to say. What voices were whispering to him, I knew not; for that every man hears a speech within him unheard by other men, I cannot doubt. I wanted to be circumspect and considerate, feeling that I might readily blunder in further discussion of such mysteries, inasmuch as it was plain that neither of us could have a perfect understanding of the other, so I thought I was safe in saying:

“Aye, my Laird, what ye say I hae no’ a mind to doot, for o’ a verity there is aye a still sma’ voice o’ the spirit within us, and it is deep that answereth unto deep.”

He gave close heed to me while I spoke, and then shook his head slowly and almost despondently. “Gillicuddy,” said he, after a pause, “ye dinna understand me, an’ I canna blame ye, for ye are just ae man, an I am just anither, but this I hae to say, and ye may understand me or no’, and ye may think me daft or no’, but before God I say that the Spirit has a voice that ca’s to the ear o’ sense, and has a tongue that is audible to man’s earthly sense.”

I forgot myself for an instant when I heard him utter such words, and before I could restrain myself I cried with some vehemence:



“Lord bless me, man, I wonder to hear ye talk sic clavers.”

I could have bitten my tongue off for my hasty words, for in an instant my master was aroused far beyond his usual, and getting to his feet came close to me, with his finger on his lips in a most mysterious and secret manner, and leaning his body forward to me, so that his face came near to mine, said in a voice half a whisper, as though he feared its being heard:

“Gillicuddy, I swear to ye, by the God that sits there among thonder stars, by the love I bore to her who is lost to me, that I hae heard wi’ this ear o’ mine the sound o’ her voice, aye, and the words o’ her mouth. *Aye, she has spoken to me, and called me frae oot o’ the grave.*”

I was completely in terror at his words, but I had sense to hide the thought that was in me that he was past the bounds of reason and gone mad with his trouble, and I was sorely anxious to pacify him by seeming to side with him and accept in some way his mad fancy as rational, so I said: “Eh, my Laird, it’s a strange thing ye tell, and micht weel be past common belief, but tell me, where did ye hear it, and when?”



“Ah, Gillicuddy,” he answered me, and there was a tone of quiet drollery in his voice for all the seriousness of our talk, “I’m no’ so daft as ye think me, and if I kenned na’ that ye are a true man, and wi’ a heart warm to me, I wad say ye were but triflin’ wi’ me, but deed we hae cracked lang enough, and we’ll hae baith need o’ sleep, so get ye to yer bed, and a guid nicht to ye, and here, man, let me hae a grip o’ yer hand, for, Gillicuddy, for a’ yer doots o’ my sanity, I ken ye hae nae doots o’ my love for ye.”

He grasped my hand warmly and held it in his; I looked up into his face and put my hand upon his shoulder. Neither of us said more. His face was peaceful and strong, but there were tears glistening in my eyes as I passed out of his room and went slowly to my own apartment.



## CHAPTER X.

### WANDERING IN THE GLEN.

I COULD not but think that at last my master's troubles and miseries of mind were bringing him grievously enough to loss of reason, and it was with an anxious mind and a sad heart that I contemplated his present condition and looked forward with forebodings of worse to come. Since he had sworn to me of hearing the voice of my Lady with the ears of sense, he had not by word or act approached the matter again, and as for myself, I had kept carefully from naming it to him, for I was never a man to come to a matter of that kind unbidden, more especially with such a self-sincere man as my master, whose thoughts were not to be made the common property of every meddler.

There was one thing, and that an essential one, that I had not learned, and which I fain would have known. It was the matter of my Laird's wandering at night, as Geordie Gilles-



pie had avouched with so much earnestness and suggested evil of sorcery, and which had been continued since my return from Abbeyfont now three days gone by. I was of a mind to seek Geordie again, and get from him more than he had told me, but I knew him to be such a blethering body, and so keen to mix fiction with fact, that I could not but feel myself belittled in having speech with him on a matter of serious import where exact truth was of paramount consideration, and so I put aside speaking to him, and sought alone by myself to learn more of my master's strange habit of leaving the house at night, and coming back when all of us were in our beds.

I kept a close watch, and at last on the third night after my speech with him, I did that which I would have been truly ashamed to confess to the Laird, which was to follow him in secret, a thing that I was loath to do, it not being wholesome to my stomach to play the spy.

On this day, the Laird had been about as usual, and late in the afternoon I saw him leave the house and stroll down the highroad. I saw him turn from the road and walk along the hollow upward toward the glen, and when he had gotten thus far and was beginning to



be lost at times among the trees, I slipped out at the back of the house, and made across the fields at an angle that would bring me out, I thought, well up the glen, and in time to intercept my Laird, if he wandered that far.

When I had gotten into the glen, I sat down hidden behind a fallen tree, and looked down through the rocky chasm, and there was my Laird toiling up toward me on the opposite bank.

I got up from my concealment and began again to ascend the glen, which grew wilder and more fearsome in its solitude as I climbed higher. Far away among the ruins of Nature's conflict I could see at last the figure of the Laird, his form coming in sight for a moment of time, and lost again for longer space.

What brought him here was the question on my mind, and like a riddle I was repeating it, searching for an answer, but the more I puzzled over it, the more unaccountable it all was, and the more there was growing upon me the awful conviction that around us all there was some unholy mystery hovering, and that not only my master's reason was enthralled with some strange spell, but that my own spirit was feeling the influence of un-



natural and awesome surroundings. While there was a great din and confused rumble of sounds about me, yet I was somehow only conscious of a silence deep and overwhelming, and when a stick broke under my foot with a snap, or a stone loosened from the path fell rattling from a ledge, the sound gave me a shock like that of terror; so solitary and deadly lone was the place.

I was crouching near St. Cuthbert's Cairn, which I could see dimly rearing its vine-grown pile of stones to the stature of a man. Under this monument, long years since, the bones of St. Cuthbert, borne by his pious brethren in cloak and cowl, had been buried, and there the waters below had sung ever since a wild requiem for his soul's repose.

The place of the Cairn was ever a grewsome one, and now in the shadows of approaching night, stealing out from bush and tree, and lurking behind the deep, tangled clumps of forest growth, it seemed a throne where solemnity might sit brooding undisturbed for eternal years. I could see the Laird, who had come out upon a piece of shelving rock, and was standing looking down into the gorge as though musing. Ah, but it was strange to see him there. There in solitude,



enshrouded in this deep, lonely glade, amid the gurgle of falling waters, and the roar and tumble of the torrents, was my master, his soul troubled with wild emotions, wandered from his own fireside, to stand there filled with such strange thoughts and mad fancies as God only knew, and which I could but imagine were neither human or wholesome.

It was growing darker now, and as the shadows grew thicker, my Laird's form was dim and uncertain against the black background of the wild growth behind him, but I saw him turn toward the head of the glen again and come on. Soon I lost him entirely for a time, but when I next caught sight of his moving figure, he was almost opposite to me, so that I might have called to him, but in the roar of the water I could not have been heard by him, for indeed no sound of human voice could have been heard there, and though I listened with an overstrained sense, I could not hear his step, nor the rattling of the loose stones which I knew his feet set a-rolling. Not three rods from me did he pass on the opposite side of the glen. I could see his features dimly, and there was, I thought, nothing uncommon in them. He seemed as one in deep thought, and yet as one



alive to his surroundings and listening to the sounds about him.

Upward he went, and I saw him pass the Cairn, and stand a moment on a ledge of rock. I saw him pause there with his face toward me, and then down he sat on the edge of the rock and leaned his head on his hands.

For a long space, it seemed to me, I saw him sit, never moving or changing his position, as though charmed with the spell of this dread sanctuary of solitude, removed from men and men's ways, a fit spot for spirits to dwell. Here amid the strange voices of nature, whispering and moaning, he sat alone, and so he was still sitting when the darkness of night came down, as it were, all in a moment upon the glen, black and impenetrable, burying him and all other things in the thick murk of midnight.

My mind had been in no state of comfort before, and now it was fast bringing me to the verge of terror, for as I looked about me, trying to penetrate the darkness which had grown thick and unfathomable, I found my imagination actively conjuring up uncanny things that were not like to be comforting to me, as I can truly avouch. It was not long before strange shapes were beginning to loom



before me, and at length the whole eerie solitude became phantom-haunted. I could have sworn that I saw a great figure of a man rise out of the chasm dressed in a monkish garb of cloak and cowl, and come toward me as I crouched in fear, and more than once I thought I saw a grisly wraith flit by so close to me that I felt a rush of air and the touch of its fluttering shroud. All about me the place seemed haunted with forms and voices, as if I had wandered into the land of spirits, so that down deep in my soul I was in such a state of dismay and awful terror that I was seized with a great trembling, the sweat starting on my forehead and trickling cold on my face.

I could restrain my pent-up feelings no longer, and just lifted up my voice and called to the Laird, and though I called loudly, the sound of my voice was as naught in that bewildering solitude, and it seemed to me as if it never left my lips but was smothered within me. I called again and again, appalled with the sound of my own voice, and listened with my ears strained to catch a response. As I listened, I thought my cries were at times answered by unearthly and eldrich voices that came out of the blackness about me, whisper-



ing close to my ear, and calling out of the distance far up and down the glen.

I was filled with dread unspeakable now, and in such a state of mind that I was fain to bethink myself of but one thing, and that was to flee from the horrors of this place, and cease crying where crying was vain, so I began to grope my way with many pains, and many an ugly bruise, out from the spot where I had crouched, creeping upon my hands and knees much of the time, and stretching my arms before me to guide and protect me.

Gradually and with great labor and horrid fears, I got so far to the right of the glen and its dense growth that I could see at times above me a bit of sky and a star blinking faintly in the zenith. When I had come out where the fields lay and the path was fairly clear, I had little difficulty in my progress, though the memory of the things I had felt was still strong upon me, and the road before me lonely enough.

I had reached that place where there was a foot-path which I well knew led through the fields toward the highroad, and where at a distance of two hundred yards I knew old Tibbie's hut to be, when I heard the crackling of twigs. I stopped to listen, when I made out distinctly



a footstep on the path before me. It was a slow, shuffling step, and drawing near me. With my heart starting anew to beating, I fell back into the shadow of a bush about ten feet from the path, and getting down on my knees bent forward and watched.

Dimly at last I saw a blacker shadow in the dark, and it seemed gigantic as I strained my eyes toward it. Closer it came, and clearer I saw it. It seemed to shrink to the stature of a human creature now, and when it was opposite to me, it seemed yet less in size. As it passed me slowly, I knew the figure, bent and double and wrapped in its long cloak, to be no other than old Tibbie, wandering in the night on what errand I knew not. I watched her as she vanished in the dark, with her back to her own cot, and going toward Glenhaugh. When she passed me, I still stood where I was until I could hear no more the sound of her feet in the stillness.

When I arose from my hiding place and had come opposite to Tibbie's cot, I saw a light flickering sharply in the window. I thought it strange that Tibbie's hearth should glow and Tibbie traveling from it, and a strange desire came upon me to take a peep in at Tibbie's hearth, deserted and lonely, with the



fagots burning and warming the house for her return.

When I stepped aside from the path toward the light I confess I felt ill at ease, being not only filled with fancies uncanny, but having a sense of doing a stealthy thing, reproachful to my self-respect. I had half a mind to turn back as I came, so timorous and reproachful were my feelings, but I resolved at last to take one glance through the little end window at least and be off again.

Creeping quietly around the darkest side of the house, I stole up under the deep-set little window where the light was streaming, and standing upon the tip of my toes I looked in, and there I saw a thing that struck terror into me, so that I waited not a minute, but turned and fled as if the devil pursued me, for there before my eyes I saw the fagots burning and old Tibbie herself sitting, bent double, at the fireside.

As I fled with my flesh creeping and a cold perspiration upon me, I was completely under the power of an awful influence that drove rational thought from my mind, for the grew-some spectacle of Tibbie's double had all but upset my reason. As for my master, it was little thought I had given to him from the





THERE I SAW A THING THAT STRUCK TERROR INTO ME.







moment I set out in my flight from the glen, and not until the lights of Glenhaugh blinked before me did my mind return to him, and as it did I confess I found myself unpleasantly associating him not only with the fearful phantoms there but with the uncanny figure sitting at Tibbie's hearth, in the form and semblance of the absent old woman whom my eyes had seen wandering in the night.



## CHAPTER XI.

### SIR GILBERT LAUNSTON.

It was in the servants' hall that I took refuge after my flight from the glen, and after the grewsome experience I had just passed, the homely and comfortable atmosphere of the hall, with its clatter of dishes and gossip of the fireside, was soothing and pleasant beyond words.

As I lingered there for a brief space, I overheard three or four of our serving women speaking among themselves of the late advent in our neighborhood of Sir Gilbert Launston, one of the gentry in our part of the country. Little heed I paid to the gossip, but indeed it was this same Sir Gilbert Launston whose coming among us was to develop with vital significance the strange story of my Laird, and who was now to direct my mind happily from the late horrors of my experience, and restrain me from further active investigation of my Laird's wandering and Tibbie's supernatural powers.



This Sir Gilbert Launston was, for all his title, his lace, and his fine manners, just the most impudent dog, I thought, in all the King's realm, and yet he was not without a clever wit, and his tongue was never thick, but always ready with a sally to tickle the fancy. He had no end of tales at the tip of his tongue, and was never at a loss to fill in a gap, and when the demand on his powers of converse was not in force, he just tossed his head in the air, and whistled a scrap of a sentimental tune, or it might be a bawdy song, or lightly trilled a line or couplet from some merry ditty.

I think my Laird paid little heed to him, and gave him no more especial consideration than if he were one of the regular people of the house, and indeed he was a kind of connection of the Laird's, of remote condition, and it was on that that he made bold to quarter himself at Glenhaugh of late, biding with us for days, and he might have dwelt there forever for all the objection the Laird would have offered. He had been a stranger to Glenhaugh for long years, and had never seen my Lady or had other knowledge of her than that which he picked up in the gossip of the neighborhood, and now that he was back at



Glenhaugh he had learned my master's story, but indeed not from me, for I was determined to tell him nothing.

"Ah, Gillicuddy," he would say to me, and perhaps it was a slap on the back, or a poke in the ribs he would accompany his words with, "it's a dull place this old house of Glenhaugh. I wonder a man of your spirit can abide to stay in it. You can but live the life of a snail here. I wonder you do not pack up your kist and cross the Channel, where there is no dry rot as there is here. Why, man, you are just perishing here for the want of the good things of life. Come, Gillicuddy, just off with me to Paris, and I'll show you a life that will set the blood in your veins to tingling." I was like to answer him in some such fashion as would make him red in the face with laughing, saying: "I wadna say, Sir Gilbert, but yer frien's in Paris will be thinking lang o' yer absence. I'm just fine where I am, but they'll be pining for ye sairly."

"Gillicuddy," he said to me one day, "I wonder such a douce and sober man as you does not take a wife?"

"Faith," said I, "I hae often wondered at that mysel'."



"Mayhap," said he, "it's not such a wonder among the lasses," and I saw a twinkle in his eye, for he would poke a bit fun at me.

"'Deed no," I answered, "for it's no' the likes o' me that's wanted, it's mair like to be some flatterer they'll seek. I hear, Sir Gilbert, ye hae had mony a chance offered ye yersel'."

"And you have heard aright," he said, "but by St. Louis, there be three things that I must get bound together in the woman I would consider for wiving."

"And what may they be?" I asked.

"Well, Gillicuddy, first I demand virtue in her, next I must have wisdom, and last and best of all, I must have wealth with her."

"I' faith, Sir Gilbert, yer hard to please, and ye ask much, but if I micht nae be considered ower blunt, I'd just like to ask ye, what hae ye yersel' to gie in exchange for a' these? Ye maun hae something to gie that I hae no' been able to find in ye, for I'm sure the things ye ask, ye dinna possess yersel', neither virtue, wisdom, nor wealth."

I thought he winced under my words, as well he might, but his impudence was equal to any emergency, and he laughed with more



mirth than there was any warrant for, and was just red in the face like to burst:

“By the King’s caul, ye’re keen, Gillicuddy, you have a tongue like a knife, and you are not given to flattery, I swear. I fear you would not do so well at the court; but, man, you just owe me a bottle for speaking so ill of me, so up with it and drink my health, an you would get my forgiveness.”

Sir Gilbert with that glib tongue of his could not be satisfied, but must ever gab upon any matter that came to his mind, and so, it had come to me that Sir Gilbert and the Laird had had speech more than once upon the history of my Lady’s disappearance. I could not see that the effect on the Laird was outwardly perceptible, but yet I was such a close student of the Laird’s ways, and so keenly in sympathy with all that effected his welfare, that I had discovered a change in him, a change that I thought was not for the best. What I saw dimly but positively was a touch of nervous excitement, and a kind of impatience of manner new to him, as if the memory of the past had been reawakened in him, and was giving him pain. I blamed Sir Gilbert for this, and I felt that it would have been a special providence had he stayed in Paris and



not come to Glenhaugh to open a secret matter that might have been well left undisturbed, and so I planned to have converse with him, and to give him a bit of my mind that would silence his meddling.

I had a good opportunity on the evening of the second day after I had followed my master to the glen, for the Laird was off again at his wandering. Sir Gilbert was walking in the upper hall, and humming to himself as I came down from my room, and when he saw me he made a grand salute, and said:

“By the crook of St. Agnes, Gillicuddy, you come to me like a stream of sunlight to a prisoner in a dungeon. I’m fairly given up to the spirit of what the French call *ennui*, and if I cannot get the companionship of man in this bleak hole of Glenhaugh, but must be left to my own lonely reveries, I’ll just perish with the dreariness of life. Come man, up with a bottle of the best, and let the twain of us while an hour away with the exchange of our wit, for before God, Gillicuddy, if it were not for the sparkle of your genius here, I could find it in my mood to pack and leave without ceremony. The Laird’s just a dead man, and there’s no more spirit or spice in him than in a stewed prune.”



I thought there was a good opening here for the converse I sought, so I gave orders to have the bottles up, and down we sat together. It was a sight to see my gentleman with a bottle before him. I think at such a time he was a man risen far beyond the cares of earth, and set upon a throne with every ill beneath him, snapping his fingers at every trouble, and ready to fling a challenge at death itself. With his haughty bearing he would stretch forth his arm with a swing, and pour the wine from a bottle with the most abandoned and free action, perhaps singing as he did it, in a not unmusical key, a light snatch of some lilting melody, smiling all the time as if in some devil-may-care rapture, and when he had drunk off his glass with the easy manner of a connoisseur, he would smack his lips, and sit back in his chair, satisfied with himself, and superior to everything else in the universe.

This was his manner as we sat down together, and the first words he said after draining his glass were: "And now, Gillicuddy, to hell with care and the philosophy of life. The inspiration of existence dwells in the juice of the grape, and the sublime and beautiful are just squeezed through the wine-press,



and corked up in a flagon to be drawn at man's will and convenience."

Said I, "And that's a very pretty conceit, but I think it is but a silly one, for I fear there's mair than inspiration in the grape. I hae seen murder, and misery, and death in it, and as for the sublime and beautiful, that is naught but the drunken dream o' them that awake wi' brains befuddled and the horrors o' remorse at their ain foolishness, and as for sending care to the deevil, it's mair easy to say than to do. Think ye my master's cares could be so easily dismissed?"

"The master is just daft," said he, "and not to be counted among men."

"And how mak' ye that oot?" I asked, resenting his easy and contemptuous assertion. "The Laird is just as fair and sane a man as ere managed an estate and opened his hand wi' hospitality to a' who cam' under his roof."

He never paid heed to me, more than to laugh so loud that I thought he would do himself a harm. Then he made another sweep of his arm and poured out another glass.

"Gillicuddy," said he, "you are just a man among a thousand and worth more to the Laird than a vintage, and it's little care that



may come to the Laird with Gillicuddy by his side; but for all that, the Laird is not a sane man. You have done your best, but the bogles of daftness have gotten in at him for all your watchfulness."

Now was my time to say what I had wanted to say, so I began: "Sir Gilbert, I am a plain man, and I hae a great love and loyalty to my master. I hae nae mind to give ony man offense, least o' a' ane who is under this roof and enjoying the hospitality o' the Laird's fireside, but I hae it in my mind to tell ye that ye are no' helping the Laird oot o' his troubles when ye talk to him o' his wife, and question him on the particulars o' her loss; a thing that ye were warned no' to do, and which it were best no' to continue doing if ye hae his welfare and peace o' mind at heart."

He listened to me with great patience I must affirm, and I confess I had a thought to see him fly into a passion. He said nothing in answer for a few moments, but just leaned back in his chair and seemed to be studying me in a pleasant way.

I was beginning to feel uneasy at this piece of play-acting, for it was like a bit of his impudence to stare at me in that situation to my woeful embarrassment, and I was just letting





“GILLICUDDY, DO YOU THINK YOU CAN KEEP A SECRET?”







my discomfiture give place to indignation at what I thought was his accursed insolence, when he leaned forward and putting his hand on my shoulder said, with more seriousness in his tone and manner than he had ever shown:

“Gillicuddy, do you think you can keep a secret?”

“What mean ye?” said I, and I confess I was astonished at his words and manner.

“Can you keep a secret?” he asked again. “A secret in the interests of your master.”

“Aye, that I can,” I answered. “In the name o’ God what hae ye to tell?”

“I have a long story to tell,” he said, “and if you’ll just bar the door and fortify your stomach with another dram, I’ll make a beginning at once.”



## CHAPTER XII.

“I’VE A LONG STORY FOR YOU.”

“I’VE a long story for you, Gillicuddy,” said Sir Gilbert, when I had set myself to listen, and poured out a glass for myself. “Aye, Gillicuddy, a long story, and one that will make your eyes open wide with the wonder of it, and if I be not mistaken your ear will not tire till you hear the end of it, but, by Heaven, I must again have your promise, on your honor, that no word of mine shall have repetition from your lips.”

I told him when he had gotten thus far that I was not an auld wife to sit by the fire and gossip of my master, and as I was never fond of long prefaces, I was ready to listen to what he had to tell without more palaver.

“Damn me! Gillicuddy,” he cried, “you have a delicate way of putting forward your thought, but I will not gainsay that you are wise about the preface, so I’ll cut that short as far as may be, and into the story *sans* palaver;



but, mind me, there will be need of some bit of rhetorical preface ere you can be prepared to understand my story, and so, Gillicuddy, as you are a man of some erudition, with your leave a bit of history, as I may call it, will not be amiss."

When he had come to this point, he filled his glass with that grand cavalier manner of his, and taking a sip began:

"If that flabby lump of humanity, Louis Capet, had not been so busy tinkering at the locksmith's trade, but had been more after the fashion of his ancestor, Louis XV., he that was at last o'ermastered by Mme. Dubarry and the smallpox, you and I, Gillicuddy, would hardly have been sitting here together telling stories; and you may think o'er that, my man, at your leisure, and if the gomeril Louis had not convened the Assembly of Notables in eighty-seven, and made a high-road for the States General with its damned Third Estate to march on to Versailles in eighty-nine, there would have been no story to tell; for, by the pit of hell, the things I am about to tell were brought to my knowledge mainly out of this same historical-political hotch-potch of French kingcraft and court folly; and that's a bit of preface for you, Gilli-



cuddy, whether you have the wit of a politician to understand it or not.

“ You will understand, Gillicuddy, that France had been for a long time like a bankrupt with little credit. There was no revenue to be gotten from any source to maintain the Government in its luxury, for every stream had been pumped dry, and what with taxes and tithes squeezed from the common people to support a wheen of my friends of the court and the clergy, in an extravagance of living that was past belief, there was little wonder that the whole nation of wage-earners had become a multitude of impoverished and hungry men and women.

“ While I lived high myself, I was not blind to the misery that was about me, and i’ faith I was beginning to have a touch of prophetic inspiration like that of Jeremiah, and ready to foretell a bit of trouble and calamity; for the signs of the times were filled with significance.

“ You see, Gillicuddy, at this time, aye and for a long time before this, everything in France was ripe for some terrible reaction, for it was lavish greed and grandeur among the few, and among the many it was just misery of existence with little more than scant loaves of black bread, aye and millions of famishing



creatures glad to get grass and the bark of trees for sustenance.

"By God, Gillicuddy, you may believe me the people were just gotten to be like hunted animals, ready to turn at bay, and it was to this state of things had France come, with the simpleton Louis at his wits' end, and at last the Paris rabble battering at the Bastile, having got encouragement by the convening of its friends of the Third Estate at Versailles.

"I had spent a long stretch of time in Paris before the French Exchequer had been emptied, and indeed while I feared more national calamity, yet I had little serious thought of danger ahead for myself or friends till that woeful 14th of July came of which you know full well, Gillicuddy, and the Bastile was leveled by the excited populace of Paris with Santerre and Maillard at the head of it. That was a signal for some of my friends of the court to pack their kists, with small ceremony, and seek a climate more agreeable; but though I could see there was trouble brewing for the gentry, and like to be a bit more of fury, I just bided quietly in the background, as one may say, and waited for the storm to blow over; but damn me, Gillicuddy, the



devil's blood was up, and there began a bonny dance.

“What with pock-marked Mirabeau haranguing at the Assembly, and the Austrian Guards and the black cockade matter, there got a lively jig going among all men, and it was not a Maypole that was put up, but a pike with the head of old Foulon, a State Minister, streaming with blood, and a wisp of straw stuffed into the gab of him, and all Paris, aye and all France to its very borders, lilting an anthem of ill omen.

“It was through all of this devil's time I was in Paris, Gillicuddy, after scores of my friends had gotten over the frontier, thinking it safer to be at a distance. As for myself, not being a Frenchman born, I thought I might hang on a while longer, and watch the turn affairs were taking, but indeed, if I had dreamed of the wild rascality of the city, and the ill temper of the rabble, you'd have seen me at Glenhaugh a bit earlier in the day.

“With excitement and anxiety, and a kind of merry cruelty possessing all men, each day brought forth some newly invented and diabolical antic, and what with bells ringing and fires burning, and mobs of tattered and starving wretches tramping ceaselessly in the



streets, with drums beating and carrying staves and torches, the most hellish carnival was kept up that man had e'er seen.

"But as you care not for a long preface, I'll just say no more than this, that Paris was in a terrible state of disturbance with the National Assembly sitting at Versailles, trying to regenerate France and the King in a swither wondering at it all, when the first incident of my story pushed itself forward, and it came about in this way:

"I was dining one evening in a café in the Rue St. Honoré, when who should I meet but a man that I had known ten years before, and who had been dead and buried for the past nine years, if the testimony of eye-witnesses and grave-diggers was to be believed. I had read his funeral notice in print, and had heard a Mass at Notre Dame said solemnly for the repose of his soul, and if I had given him a thought since then it was to fancy him dwelling in purgatorial realms with little chance of prayer ever getting him into the company of saints.

"Before Heaven, Gillicuddy, you may believe me I got a shock when I saw my dead and buried friend just risen superior to all the grave-delvers and the death-services of the



church, and sitting before me and sipping wine, and making a hearty meal from the flesh-pots of life.

“ Now the name of the worthy before me was Courtray, or, to be more precise, it was Jean Lazarus de Courtray, a name borne by a good French family, and indeed as to one part of it, a most fitting name for my old friend; for if I have not forgotten the Scripture of my youth, Gillicuddy, it was a certain person of that very name that came forth from the grave lang syne.

“ This same Courtray sitting before me had been a gay chiel in his younger days, and run through a grand estate left him by his family, so that when I lost sight of him, ten years before, he was at the end of his fortune, and just a beggar plunged in debt, with nothing but a good family name and a bad character.

“ I remember to have heard a story of his infamous conduct toward a young woman, the only daughter of a Scotch gentleman, resident in France, who had staked his gear on the Jacobite Pretender, him they named Bonny Charlie, and fled his country with a meager purse after the fell disaster of Culloden Field. It seems the young woman, being



little more than a child in years, he had beguiled from the convent where she was being reared and schooled, and after a clandestine marriage, followed by a short period of the most cruel and shameless treatment, had wantonly deserted her, and left her to the mercy of the world. She had sought her father then, but in place of getting comfort and shelter from him, he had turned her adrift with a curse, refusing to take her in or give her any countenance whatever, driving her off an outcast, disgraced and disowned. Upon this, for so rumor had it, having no friend to turn to, she had sought Courtray again, but he had laughed like a devil at her, and refused to give her recognition as a wife, even denying his marriage to her.

"What became of her thereafter no man seemed to know positively, but gossip had it that she had sworn, in the bitterness of her spirit, to part with her name and hide her identity, and to begin life anew among strangers in another country. These were but rumors, Gillicuddy, and vague they were, I will confess, but I had some of them at the time from such authority as led me to think them essentially true. As to her father, and this is no rumor, for I had it from



a witness of repute, he died shortly after his daughter's appeal to him, and went to the grave with the absolution of the Church, and cursing his only child for deceiving him. There was little reason to doubt all the evil tales I heard of Courtray, for before heaven he was just a man lost in the sea of worldly dissipation, and drifted on to the rocks of ruin and disgrace.

“ I need not dwell on these particulars, Gillicuddy, but may simply say, to round out my story, that, from one disgraceful thing to another, my young gentleman found himself accused of a felony in his efforts to eke out his high living, and when the officers of justice were asking for him, he took leg-bail and left the country without shaking hands with them.

“ Well, Gillicuddy, wherever he was, rumor had it that he had crossed the sea, and made his way into the American wilds as far as Canada, and found a company of French fur-traders and adventurers near the waters of Lake Huron. It was a year after that, when this rumor was verified, for there came a lad among us fresh from America, who had been among these same fur-hunters, and he told a dreadful tale of Indian massacre, and that with his own eyes he had seen Courtray shot



down in the wilderness at the hands of savages, and seen him lying dead among a score of others. Aye, Gillicuddy, and more than that, this same traveler brought back the papers of Courtray which he had taken from his pocket when he lay dead.

"I think the news brought mourning to his creditors, if it did not to others, but as for his family they just gave him a decent burial, that is, they buried him in spirit, and in the Church of Notre Dame incense was burned and candles were lighted, and a priest in long robes said a solemn Mass for the repose of his soul.

"As for the young wife, I never heard tell of her after, and she might as well have been dead and buried, for oblivion swallowed her, and she never came out of it.

"It was no wonder, Gillicuddy, that I got a start of surprise when I saw before me my friend Lazarus, and I could scarce believe my eyes when I saw a man dead for nine years, just back to his earthly provender with an appetite that seemed to be keen from a long fast.

"I watched my gentleman through the corner of my eye for some time, and I saw plain enough that he was a bit ill at ease over



something, for he had an eye that wandered with suspicion, as if looking about for surprises, I thought. He was not dressed as a gentleman of quality, but showed plainly enough that his sojourn in another world had not been a prosperous one, for his finery was a bit threadbare and tawdry.

“ I confess, Gillicuddy, I felt a bit sorry for the man; not that he was back to life again, but that he was back looking as though the expense of his own funeral would have been a fortune in his hands. I was sorely at a loss whether to speak to him or not, for it was an uncanny thing, I thought, to break in upon the quiet of a man who had been a ghost for so long a time, but when I saw him feeding so naturally on the diet of the living, I considered the converse of the living might not be amiss, so across the room I strode, and coming up behind him just slapped him on the back and said:

“ ‘ Well, Courtray, I see you’re back again. Could not you and the devil agree, or are you here to visit the pale glimpses of the moon on a short parole only?’ Gillicuddy, you should have seen the man start and turn pale. I thought he was about to turn to a ghost again and vanish before me. He looked up to me, and said in a whisper ‘ Launston, is



it you? *Mon Dieu*, speak low, I'm not to be known.'

" 'Then you're not dead?' said I.

" 'I've some life in me yet,' said he; 'but speak low, man; and mind, Courtray is dead for the present, and I am Picot—M. Picot.'

" He was mortally disturbed, I could see, but he was still the clever devil he used to be, and he gave me his new title with such a droll twinkle in his eye that I burst out laughing, and called for a bottle.

" 'I'm happy to make your acquaintance, M. Picot,' said I, 'and we'll just sit and talk over the past, and revive the memory of our dead and buried old friend Jean Lazarus de Courtray.'

" And so, Gillicuddy, there we sat and talked long together, and there were some things in our talk will be of interest for you to hear, though I can plainly see you are beginning to fidget, thinking perhaps that all I have said is but an idle story; but wait, Gillicuddy, I am getting to the point, and if I mistake not, you'll be opening your eyes and gasping for more ere I have done with my story; so take another dram, my man, and settle yourself to hear another chapter."



## CHAPTER XIII.

“YOU'RE A FINE, MERRY DEVIL, COURTRAY.”

“AFTER we had emptied a bottle, Courtray would have me off to his lodgings, the safer to lay before me the story of his travels, so together there we sat over the wine, and it was late before we separated.

“The first words, Gillicuddy, that Citizen Picot, or Courtray, said to me were in explanation of his resurrection from the dead, so to speak. It seems that while he had been felled by the savages in North America, and left for dead, his scalp had been left to him, fortunately enough, by the painted heathens, who had not the time to take a lock of his hair for remembrance, in the hurry of business. Coming to his senses, such as they were, he found that, strangely enough, his portemonnaie, containing a flask of whisky and all of his private papers, had been taken from him. He sorely missed the flask, being nearly dead, but managed by great effort to crawl out of immediate danger without it, leaving the rest of his com-



panions, a score or more of them, lying butchered.

"The next morning after the ambush, it was his good fortune to fall in with a party of English trappers, and by them he was picked up and cared for, being carried by them with much difficulty farther toward the West, to the headwaters or tributaries of the Mississippi, and from there, after some weeks, was floated down the river on a flatboat to the Gulf of Mexico.

"The papers like to prove his identity and left with the spirit flask were the same that had been picked up and brought to France, and indeed he who had brought them told but the truth when he swore to seeing the owner of them lying dead beside them; for it was he who found Courtray, and had hastily gathered up what he thought a dead man would have no use for.

"But I need not make a long story of this, Gillicuddy, so I will just say that my gentleman wandered about the face of the earth, mainly in and about the Spanish Main, being a negro-trader at one time in the West India plantations at Jamaica, and at another time a speculator at Guiana. Indeed, Gillicuddy, I have small doubt that piracy was one of his trades as well,



for he was none too good to refuse service in any mission the devil might proffer. It was little he cared whether his family in France thought him dead or not, and in truth it was not till he got back to France, after a ten-years' absence, that he heard of his own death and funeral.

"He had come back to France about the time that the French gentry were getting over the frontier, and he found but a cold hearth, and small prospect of ever seeing fortune smile in that quarter again. He was now a gentleman at a disadvantage, as I may say, and not like to think ill of a friend who might come forward with a small loan.

"You see, Gillicuddy, my gentleman could get no profit among the aristocracy, for 'deed there was little of that breed left in France, and his pocket was far too shallow to keep up appearances, so he was just in love with the common people, and lived among them as Citizen Picot after the new style, denouncing the King and the Nobles, and clavering about 'Liberty,' 'Equality,' and 'Fraternity,' as if he were Marat himself, or that Prince of Mountebanks, Philippe d'Orléans. So here he was born again to a new life among the *canaille*, with the old life of high station left



behind with all its debts unpaid, and I must confess, Gillicuddy, that I was myself much in the same fashion at the time, for it had become in Paris an unwholesome thing to be counted one of the quality, and indeed, if it had not been for the political obligation of the times, and a low ebb of my own financial streams, I would hardly have been dining myself in the Rue St. Honoré that day.

"After I had heard the long story he had to tell of his adventures, and we had emptied several bottles of cheap wine, I asked him a question which had been in my mind more than once that night. 'The young lass you took from the convent,' said I, 'she that was called your wife, have you heard aught of her?'

" 'That I have,' said he, 'and the best news that I have heard for this many a day. *Mon Dieu*, if it were not for the news I've heard of her, I'd not be sitting here so contented without a Louis d'Or in my purse. *Mon Dieu*, that wife of mine comes like an angel to me in my distresses. Comes like an angel *de finance*, holding out both palms to me filled with fair English pounds sterling. She's a mine of wealth, I hear, and I look to delve where the vein is rich. What think you,



Launston, of my little Scotch-French wife just throwing off her widow's weeds and catching a Scotchman with a fine estate for me?'

" 'And is that the plot of the play?' said I.

" 'It's the first act, if you like,' said he, '*avant-propos*, or you may call it the prologue.'

" 'And what will be the end of the play?' I asked.

" He shrugged his shoulders and lifted his eyebrows, as the French have a habit of doing, and said:

" 'The end of it will be, M. Picot with a lien on a Scotch estate, and madame the banker, paying Picot's debts.'

" 'Before God,' said I, 'you're a fine, merry devil, Courtray, or Citizen Picot, or Beelzebub, if you will, but do you mean to tell me that she who was Mme. Courtray is married again, and to a Scotchman with an estate?'

" 'That's what I mean,' said he, 'married to a countryman of yours, and a Laird, as they call him in your country.'

" 'It's a score of Lairds I know in my country, Courtray,' said I, 'and little but the name have they. Small wealth the most of them can boast. I have in mind the story of



a pirate that plundered seven Scotch islands, and got three shillings and sixpence out of his adventure. I'm thinking the end of your play may not be so musical with the jingle of gold as you think, but who may the Laird be? Give him a name.'

"He shook his head and looked at me with a shrewd smile, and said: 'Let him be incognito, or if you will have a name for him, call him M. Sponge, for he must be squeezed for stealing the wife of my bosom.' Then he laughed a villainous laugh, and went on.

"*'N'importe. Par Dieu*, Launston, if the Scotch Laird's estate does not yield gold for me, the Laird himself shall pay with the price of his happiness, and for very truth, gold or no gold, my mind is in the humor for revenge on the both of them, and I look forward to fine sport in the hunting of them. *Par Dieu*, I think I'm in the chase for the wantonness of it, though I look to have my pockets lined by the way.'

"'It's a dirty trick you plan,' said I, 'have you no feeling for the woman you married? and the man, what ill has he done?'"

"'To perdition with the wife and the man,' he cried, 'my mind does not run in the channel of sentiment; I'm in for the sport of the



thing, or if you like, *pour passer le temps*. Besides, do you think I'll see another man with a wife of mine?'

" 'A wife of yours?' said I. 'She ne'er was a wife of thine in more than name, if what I've heard be true, for she was but a child when you mock-married her, and little she got from you but immediate desertion and abuse. Then have you not been dead for near ten years? I'll be sworn the woman has ne'er named you to the man, and that he married her without knowing that you ever existed. She'd not be like to take pride in telling of her alliance to such as you. What devil's prank is this that you play? This is not the deed of a man, but a devil.'

" ' *Vive le diable!* ' he cried, laughing. 'If I take virtue to my arms, I must bid adieu to the gold, and I cannot do that, or my own happiness is gone. No, no, Launston, it is a matter of self-interest,—my happiness or the man's,—and I've decided in my own favor. Already I have pulled the strings, and the puppets are beginning to dance for me.'

" 'You have no claim on her by law,' said I.

" 'A snap for the law,' answered he. 'I have a claim, I think, on her pride and her peace of mind.'



" 'And now you have begun your dirty work,' said I, 'how prospers it?'

" 'A curse on ill luck! not as well as I liked at first, but fortune begins to smile. You see I scented the quarry and ran it down by writing a letter to madame, announcing my safe return from the grave. I got my scent partly through one of madame's former friends, and partly through a vagabond countryman of yours, for both held a link or two in the chain I was trying to piece together. I say, then, I wrote a letter to *ma chère*, and in it I penned a chapter of such vows of love and yearning tenderness and repentance that I swear, when I put it down in black and white and read it over, I was near melted to tears with my own eloquence. Then I added a chapter of passion, threatening the life of the man who had robbed me of a wife, and ended by a promise to invade the domestic paradise in person to tell my own version of our *affaire d'amour*, if my lady did not respond as I decreed. I forwarded the packet, and waited, and *mon Dieu*, I winged my bird at the first shaft, for by the next mail across the Channel came a letter from madame, saying she would meet me at the place and time appointed in my letter; for I had named them both like a dictator, and I



think madame had not forgotten that I was a man like to keep my word, and as implacable as Fate. I waited for the time to come, but as the devil would have it, the craft she was directed to sail by was seized at Boulogne by order of the Government for having on board a cursed Austrian spy, and the whole company of voyagers was marched to the nearest military post, and kept under strict surveillance for weeks. All this I learned not twenty-four hours since, just when I was beginning to think of crossing the water to push the war in the enemy's country; when there comes a letter from my fair prisoner of state, explaining her delay and agreeing again to the tryst. It's on the prospect of a good stroke of fortune that I have opened a dozen bottles to-day. To-morrow morning I leave Paris for Versailles, where, before another day, I look to do a good stroke of business, if the devil favors me and the Scotch Laird's estate is worth a fair mortgage. So, Launston, here's a health to the devil, and a successful *coup de finance* at the gateway of the King's château.' "



## CHAPTER XIV.

### AT THE GATEWAY OF THE KING'S CHÂTEAU.

“IT was long after midnight, being well on to daybreak, when I rose to bid adieu to Courtray, and when he showed me down the long stair of his lodging, holding the candle at the top landing, I will confess to you, Gillicuddy, that I was taking a journey not without peril, for the stair was steep and narrow and dark, and the drink I had sipped was humming under my bonnet like a bee. I had come to the lower landing in safety, and had got a whiff of the morning air, and was just drawing my cloak about me, for it was both cold and wet this November dawn, when I heard a great sound of feet hurrying by, and a confusion of people crying and shouting.

“When I got out into the street there was a lively carnival a-going, and you would have said that all Paris had just sworn an oath that night to abolish the institution of sleep with the institution of monarchy, for by the Holy Cross I think Paris never went to bed that



night. Since the terrible night of the 14th of July, when poor De Launay heard all Paris knocking and crying at the gates of the Bastille, the people were gone mad with excitement, and there was no quiet or rest with them either night or day, so I was not surprised to see a bit of fever and midnight orgie. I had not gone far when I saw plain enough that some devil's work was brewing more than common, for the streets were just surging with a mob of the wildest creatures, men and women, mostly from the Saint Antoine quarter.

"I think you would have thought, Gillicuddy, if you had seen them, that the devil had loosed his imps out of hell to carouse in the streets. The whole city was alive with them, and from the farthest corners you could hear the cries of them, and the roar of the city was like the sound of an ocean surging in the distance.

"I could see that serious mischief was brewing, for there came pouring from every turning the wildest company eye had ever rested on. Ragged and wretched the most of them were, and gaunt and famished they were, some carrying staves and some torches, so that they were like creatures of the lower



regions more than beings of earth. As they went hurrying along, the outcry and voice of them was dreadful to hear, and the one word that rose above the din was '*Bread! Bread! Bread!*' and indeed I could not wonder at it, for they looked sorely in need of it, and not only for bread did they cry, but indeed it was the baker they cried for as well, and well I knew who the baker was, for they meant no other than Louis the King, who, I think, the most of them thought was up to his armpits in dough, and just baking long French loaves by the cartload at the Palace of Versailles.

"When I had gotten in the neighborhood of the Gardens of the Tuileries, being carried on by the mob, there in the wide space they name the Champs Elysées, I think there were gathered tens of thousands, and the terror of the scene was past description, for every soul of them seemed possessed, and what with singing and dancing and shouting themselves hoarse, Bedlam was let loose and all men had lost their reason.

"I was not long in getting to the bottom of this awful stir, for indeed there were public speakers enough haranguing the mob, and telling the matter to the people in a way like to stir them to despera-



tion. Some of these speaking were women and some were men. Fairly beside themselves they were, frenzied with enthusiasm, just shouting and gesticulating, and wild with a mad zeal, being like to drop with the energy and force of their feelings.

“ You see, Gillicuddy, there were a wheen men in Paris that had of late come to the surface of the scum of the city, and among them there was a horse-leech, rotten of body and bloodthirsty of appetite, named Marat. It was mainly through him and another clever rascal, named Camille Desmoulins, that the people were set mad to do deeds of violence. These two had gotten such a hold on the poor, ignorant raft of mortals, that they had but to name a thing, and all men were ready to take it up and carry it forward.

“ Now, Gillicuddy, as Paris had an empty stomach, and as old Foulon, living high on the State revenue, had once suggested that the people, being cattle, might eat grass, it was not to be wondered at that these same cattle should be ready to listen, when men of the Marat and Desmoulins stamp whispered that the King at Versailles was the baker, and that by going to him, he would, mayhap, share his loaves with them. So it was that Paris was up that night



making preparations to march on to the baker at Versailles, and now the cry went forth, '*Allons! Allons!*' and everywhere that was the word, and Paris was about to pay its respects to the Assembly sitting at Versailles, and supplicate the King for bread at the doors of his palace.

"Sitting here, Gillicuddy, in this quiet hole of Glenhaugh, you can get no idea of the excitement of that time, nor can you realize here the nature of these Frenchmen, for they were like powder, ready to explode at any minute and set a blaze a-going that would rage hot and terrible.

"I tell you these things, Gillicuddy, because they belong to my story, and if you picture not Paris as I saw it that night, you will not be able so well to comprehend the matters that came about later, for it was through this wild time, and mad rage of the people, that the strange things I have to tell were wrought out, and, Gillicuddy, you may believe me I will tell you no more of this interesting bit of French history than my story gives warrant for, so just take another glass and keep your soul in patience, and your ears open, for I am just on the brink of a matter that will astonish you.



“ There was no sleep for me the rest of that night, and little there was for any man. The whole city was in a ferment, and at daylight, instead of the fever of the night abating, it was just grown into a delirium, I may say. Then, what with bells ringing and drums beating, and all people crazed with the spirit of the Evil One, the day broke and the clouds hung heavy over the city, and evil was the omen of them.

“ In the van of the mob, up got a woman named Theroigne de Merricourt, and a brave and handsome harlot she was, Gillicuddy, and sitting astride of a cannon in the Champs Elysées, called upon the women of the mob to follow her, and with that and the beating of drums, and the cry of ‘ *Allons à Versailles!* ’ coming from every throat, there started up ten thousand wretches in petticoats, and with a terrible enthusiasm just took the march to Versailles, with Mme. Merricourt and a rascal named Maillard, at the head of them.

“ It was a wonderful sight, Gillicuddy, to see that army of women, with wild cries and mad antics, just follow in the wake of Mme. Merricourt and take the road for Versailles, and half of Paris following after. ’Deed, Gillicuddy, it was an army that pressed its recruits



with small ceremony, and no man or woman dared to say nay to its invitation. A merry army it was, and an army not to be resisted, so that people, willy-nilly, were gotten into its ranks, and just hurried on with a devil-may-care mixture of tragedy and humor. With supplication, and polite invitation, and threat, aye and banter, the army was recruited, and when these failed, then it was at the point of a pike that the recruits took service, or were dragged by the neck into the midst of it.

“ I was not for taking service in it myself, being more bent on taking the part of a witness of its maneuvers, but ere long two terrible hags, like twin furies out of hell, with their hair straggling wet about their shoulders and their skirts bedraggled, just took me each of them by an elbow, and with a devilish merriment escorted me into the ranks among a score of beings like themselves, who received me like a brother with demonstrations of joy, some of them throwing their arms about me, and kissing my cheeks in an ecstasy of patriotism.

“ It would be a long story to tell of the march to Versailles with that company of the devil's imps. The rain fell and drenched us, and the mire was thick, but with drums beat-



ing and pikes waving we traveled on. Ah, but it was a strange company; many fainting by the way, exhausted, and the rest just tramping on, shouting and singing, mad and merry with the humor of it.

“It was well on in the afternoon when we came to the bridge that crosses the Seine at Sèvres. Over it we marched, the whole devil’s corps of us, and up through the streets of Sèvres, tired and straggling we went, till at last we came to the very doors of the Versailles palace and halted.

“Where that vast mob of strange beings which Paris had spewed forth would find lodging and victualing no man could tell; but there it was, descending upon the town of Sèvres even to Versailles, and at the very doors of the King’s palace, under the drizzling rain, hungry and exhausted, lying down in the streets, creeping under stairs and getting what shelter, rest, and food any favoring circumstances offered.

“I was sorely in need of rest, Gillicuddy, after my march, and it was not to inspect the crockery of Sèvres that I deserted the ranks of that vagabond army of termagants and St. Antoine’s cut-throats, but for a morsel to stay my stomach and a drink of something to warm me.



“It was a great comfort when I found a lodgment in a Versailles hostelry, and lay down in a strange bed, so tired, for I had marched four long leagues after an all-night’s excitement, that I confess to you, Gillicuddy, I missed saying my prayers, and just fell asleep with my clothes on.

“I think it was far on to midnight, or rather toward the small hours of the morning, when I was awakened by a great commotion stirring in the streets and when I had gotten up and come out to learn the cause of it, there was a great uproar and hurly-burly of a thousand night prowlers and stragglers just risen from their beds, or what holes they lay in, and thronging about in some new excitement. In the midst of it all I could hear, far down the avenue, the rumble of drums, and the tramp, tramp of a great body of men coming forward, and soon, bravely advancing, came a vast army of soldiers, which was no other than the National Guard of thirty thousand armed men, with Lafayette at their head, newly come from Paris.

“When the columns had gone by, and the shivering tatterdemalions had gotten back to such beds and hutches and stray corners as they could find, I went back to my lodging, and



while I may say I did not get on my knees, yet I thanked God, Gillicuddy, that there was some prospect of the rabble being awed into respect for authority, such as it was, and that Lafayette was at our elbow.

“It was in the early morning when I awoke again, and went out to find that mischief was awake with the dawn and the devil busy.

“It seems, Gillicuddy, that a rascally raft of cut-throat prowlers, bent more on thieving and villainy than any other thing, were early at the gates of the palace, and these, bandying gibes with the King’s bodyguard, had come to ugly words. It was not long before worse than words were passed, and there came a shot from a gun in the hands of one of the Guards that laid a prowler low.

“That shot, Gillicuddy, was the signal for the bottomless pit to open, for the cry went forth on every tongue that the King’s Guard had fired on the people, and now at every gate and grating of the Château, a thousand hands clutched and rattled, seeking entrance to wreak vengeance. There was howling and cursing and more shots were fired, and the mob, growing greater and fiercer, stormed at the gates mad with rage, at



last forcing an entrance and battering at the palace doors.

“It was a bonny devil’s dance to begin the day with. I cannot picture to you, Gillicuddy, the terror of it. Like devils crazed, thousands of enraged wretches just choked the streets, shouting and shrieking. It was havoc and terror that ruled all, and the fierce temper of all men was a terrible thing to see.

“Like a great sea, the multitude heaved this way and that with the force of its dreadful currents of madness. Over the far-reaching, tossing sea of heads I could see a thousand pikes and staves brandished in fury, and wild arms thrown up in a frenzy of rage. The uproar and tumult of ten thousand throats was like the roar of a tempest, and every moment louder it grew, and wilder the madness of it raged.

“I had climbed on a wall, and was looking toward the palace steps, where the mob had now gotten planted, and was forcing its way into the palace, and I saw a long pike lifted high above the heads of the people, and on it the bleeding head of one of the King’s Guard. Then there came a great shout, and the whole mass seemed to surge and heave in every quarter.

“I was but newly turned from looking at



this horrible death's head when, Gillicuddy, I saw a thing that startled me far more than the bleeding head.

“As I hope for salvation, Gillicuddy, and wonderful as you may think it, there in the thick of the throng I saw Courtray, and near him a woman that I knew by her English dress could be no other than she he had appointed to meet. I think, Gillicuddy, you will be like to doubt my words, for that was a strange place for these two to come together, but, Gillicuddy, you must just account for the twain being in this wild company by the fatality of events which bore them, when they met here, into the great whirling multitude with a power which no soul could resist, for i' faith the potency of this terrible passion which possessed all people was as a maelstrom, drawing all men into its currents.

“Now, Gillicuddy, you may well open your eyes in wonder, but, on my honor as a man, this is no romance but God's truth. Little had either of them dreamed of the terrible things that were to happen there. As I saw them together, struggling in the mob that pressed on all sides, I thought it a strange freak of fate indeed that could draw these two, once husband and wife,



from such widely separated quarters, and with the grim irony of destiny, place them side by side in that wild and awful tide of human passions.

“I was not so far removed from them but that I could see that Courtray was seeking to get speech with the woman in the midst of that heaving sea of humanity. Ah, Gillicuddy, it was a beautiful face the lady had, and a brave one. Aye, it was as well a defiant one, and for all the villainy of Courtray, I thought it would be no easy matter for him to affright this woman, for there was a dreadful and fearless look of resolved purpose on her face, which showed me Courtray would find no easy victim to cower before him.

“As the tumult grew, and the great crowd moved back and forth, the two were pushed toward me, and at last, not ten paces away, they stood directly below me, Courtray having come within a pace of her. I could see that Courtray was striving to keep close to the woman, and a devilish smile was on his face. Pressing toward her and ever following her in the tide of moving mortals, I saw him at last come close and whisper to her, and as he did so, he reached forth his hand and took her by the arm with a devilish familiarity.



“The woman started at the sound of his voice, and turned white at his touch. Her eyes flashed upon him for an instant with a glance of deadly hate, and the next moment she drew forth from her dress a weapon; I saw it glisten in her hand, and I saw a sullen, determined purpose on her face.

“I lifted my voice, Gillicuddy, and called to Courtray, but even as I cried there was a great and sudden movement in the whole multitude of people, and a deafening noise of firing and shouting. The National Guard was forcing the mob from the palace gates, and the surging throng trembled to its center, and in a great panic fell back in confusion most dreadful.

“I saw the two swept past me still together, and in the midst of struggling and fighting and cursing I saw them carried away, still side by side, tossed helpless in the human billows, a hundred pikes waving over and about them, and the cries of a thousand voices ringing around them. Near them I saw a man felled with a pike, and heard a shriek of agony, and then, raised high overhead, I saw a bleeding face dripping on the end of a pike. In the furious mêlée and tumult still I saw the two together.





I SAW HIM BREAK THROUGH THE RABBLE.







“Suddenly, Gillicuddy, there came a tall man not three paces away, fighting his way toward them. I saw him make a road through the confused, heaving mob, as though naught could stay him. He was like a madman crazed with the passions of hell.

“I could not keep my eyes from him. A long rapier was in his hand, and toward Courtray and the woman he pressed. Near he came, and nearer. I saw him break through the rabble and stand face to face with Courtray and speak to him. I saw Courtray start, turn pale, and answer with a contemptuous sneer, and I heard the wild shriek of a woman.

“The next moment I saw the tall man rush upon Courtray like a madman, and drive the blade at his heart. In an instant Courtray had seized the woman and thrust her before him. The horror of it, Gillicuddy, is before me now. It was the woman that was pierced through with the steel, for I saw it all in the midst of that terrible tumult. She fell with a shriek, while the multitude surged wildly around her. I lost sight of Courtray and all things clearly, for naught was there to see but a wild and tossing sea of struggling men. I saw staves and pikes brandished over all and raining blows



amidst the dreadful confusion of men gone mad. I heard the cries and shouts of the excited mob of fiends as they struggled and fought in a wild surging tempest of passion, and scarcely had the mad cries come to me before I saw another horrible severed head go up in the midst of the struggling mass with gouts of blood dripping from it.

“My God, Gillicuddy, it was the head of Courtray. The cruel mob had found another victim to satiate its thirst for blood.

“I was sick at the sight. The world seemed to swim before me, and when I could look again, for I was like to drop from the wall with dizziness, there was such a horrible confusion and sound of tumultuous madness that no tongue could tell it. I was sick at the sight, and I felt myself reeling in a swoon. Only this I know, Gillicuddy, and as God is my Judge, I tell what is true, as I felt the dreadful qualm of fainting possess me, I rallied for a moment, and before I fell to the ground as one dead I saw the tall man carried away by the current of that chaos of terrors and borne from the place. I saw him look up with a death-white face to that dripping head as an irresistible tide swept him through the human whirlpool, and I heard a wild laugh,



like the laugh of a maniac, clear above the din, and the face of the man with the blood-stained rapier *was the face of your master, the Laird of Glenhaugh.*"



## CHAPTER XV.

“WHAT THINK YOU OF THE LAIRD NOW?”

YOU may be sure Sir Gilbert's story set my heart to beating, and when he had gotten to the end of it, I just sat pale, like any ghost, and stared at him speechless. Sir Gilbert looked at me a moment, and then poured out a glass for himself, and, pushing the bottle over to me, said:

“Help yourself to a dram, Gillicuddy.”

My hand was shaking when I took the bottle, and when I had taken a glass in silence, I looked over the table to Sir Gilbert, and he was still looking at me, as if waiting for a word from me.

I laid my glass down, and dropped my eyes to the floor, sitting like one borne down with the shock of dreadful tidings, and there was a weakness like a sickness upon me, when I found my voice, and said:

“My God, Sir Gilbert! it's a horrible story ye hae told me.”

“Aye, that it is,” he answered. “What



think you of the Laird now? He that has taken the life of his wife, and she an innocent woman?"

"I think a muckle pity o' him," said I; "but, oh, man, the Laird ne'er did sic a deed in his right mind."

"I'm thinking, Gillicuddy, he knew full well what he did, and that it was a planned and deliberate thing."

"How dare ye say it!" I cried, and I got to my feet in anger. "I wonder to hear ye. Little ken ye my master, if ye can say sic a thing o' him."

"Was it chance that took him to France?" said he.

"It was madness," said I, "and, Sir Gilbert, I'll no' hear a word o' ill o' him."

"You weary my patience," cried he; "your master was crazed with jealousy, it is true, but what he did was a thing planned."

"You hae a great confidence in yer ain opinion," I said dryly.

"Just keep your temper, Gillicuddy," he said, "and sit you down and listen to what I have to say. Your devotion to the Laird does you credit, my man, but you must not let your devotion carry you beyond reason. I've told you a thing that throws some new light on



the mystery of Glenhaugh; you'll admit that, my man; and if you are a man of sense, I think you'll just sit down and discuss the matter with me, and look at matters from the standpoint of reason, and be damned to feeling. I wish not to speak ill of the Laird, Gillicuddy, but to get at the core of the matter. You have been a close-mouthed man with me since I've come to Glenhaugh, and little could I get from you. Now I've given you a chapter, do you not think it would be well for you and me to come to a bit more confidence? I have seen a bit more of the world than you, and you have seen a bit more of Kennedy of Glenhaugh. Two heads are better than one, and between us, with the light we have, the mystery of this strange story may be solved from beginning to end."

"Sir Gilbert," said I, "if I hae said a hasty word, ye will pardon me, for I hae a great love and pity for my master. Ye hae been fair wi' me, and I will be as fair wi' you; but that awfu' deed was the act o' a madman."

"We'll say no more of that, Gillicuddy," said he, "and far be it from me to think different. I never said aught against his madness, but there was a cause for the mad act, and a plan for its fulfillment, and behind these



things, my man, lies the mystery, and if the twain of us just put our heads together, we'll get nearer the truth of the matter, I'm thinking."

"The whole thing," said I, "is past understanding. I'm just grown weak in the mind wi' thinkin' o' it. From first to last, it's but a jumble o' mystery, and I canna find a straight road into it or out o' it. It's a story wi' neither beginning nor end."

"I'm much of your way of thinking myself," answered Sir Gilbert. "I'm far from understanding it, but I have great faith in the power of reason, and, Gillicuddy, I think if we begin fair, and just put our wits to work, we may get at the truth in some measure, and make the crooked matter a bit straight."

"Then," said I, "we maun begin wi' the accursed packet that came frae France, for that was the first o' the calamity."

"Let us begin back of that," said Sir Gilbert, "Let us begin with the Lady and Courtray in France twelve years back."

"And what ken ye o' that time?" said I.

"It's little I ken, Gillicuddy; but I have a mind to speculate a bit," he replied.

"I'm no' fond o' speculations," I said to him, "I'm fonder o' facts."



“Hearken to me,” said he, “and mayhap fact and speculation may help to unfold the truth. Here’s what I have to offer for your consideration: A lass in her teens is beguiled by a devil in the shape of a man, named Courtray. A woeful marriage follows. The lass is betrayed and abused and deserted by the villain; more than that, she is disowned and disgraced by her father. There’s a beginning in life for a young girl in a strange land. She is cast alone on the world without a friend. She is humiliated and deserted by those who should protect her. Just think o’er that, Gillicuddy, and tell me what is this miserable outcast to do? One of two things would she do. She would fall into the depths of ruin and disgrace, a lost creature, or she would fly from her present surroundings, and hide her identity of misery and shame in a new life and under a new name. That is a rational speculation, and I submit it to you, Gillicuddy, is it not reasonable? With abuse, and desertion, and loneliness, and despair as her only experience of life, and with a great terror upon her as one hunted to the last extremity, she would end her life with her own hand, or begin a new life in a new place, with a new purpose and a new name. It is a reasonable thing to



think, you cannot dispute, Gillicuddy, and there you have the fact of her leaving France as a matter fairly accounted for."

I interrupted him to say, "Aye, it's a likely enough conclusion, and has reason to bolster it, but there's a little matter that troubles me, and that is the question o' her history among the new friends she would mak' in her new existence. She couldna begin life without question as to her past. She would hae to account for her life. Her friends would want to ken something o' her past. I fear they wouldna accept her as dropping frae the skies. She would need to hae a story o' some kind to tell, I'm thinkin'."

"Aye, Gillicuddy, she would that," he replied, "but her story would be but a story, a fabrication. It could not be else, if she kept her secret. A story made to fit the case she would plan. A story, let us say at a venture, of being an orphan, reared in a home with a hundred other unknown and deserted foundlings, or some such matter, cunningly told. The Laird could tell you that story, I'm thinking; but whatever it was, Gillicuddy, it would be a story planned to hide the truth, a story to fit her new life and to blot out the past. Then we will say she hears of the death of the



man Courtray, and she is a free woman at last, cut adrift from the past. Think of the hope that this would bring, Gillicuddy. Would it not lift her from the slough of despond, think ye? Then the years would bring comfort and peace, and at last unite her in a happy marriage to a good man; for, being a woman of education, she would have found her way, say, as a governess or lady's companion, into good company. Is it not a reasonable speculation, even if I had not certain facts to bear me out in it?"

"You hae a long head and a clever tongue, Sir Gilbert," said I. "Your speculations are fair, I canna gainsay, for indeed rumor had it that my Lady was of doubtful family and pedigree, but ye hae a long story before ye yet, and I'll ken mair when ye get to the end o' it."

"Never fear," he answered, "I'll finish my story with reason, rest easy, my man. I have facts enough to prove my theories, aye and a material fact to prove to you that the Laird never heard of Courtray; but I'll pass that now and weave out my story with a bit invention, where fact is wanting."

"You hae a great confidence in yer powers o' invention," said I.

"Gillicuddy," he cried, "I ask you is what



I have said not close to the facts, as far as we have them, and of reasonable conjecture?"

"I canna deny the reasonableness of yer story, as a story," said I, "but it's unco' like invention, as ye say, the maist o' it."

"Aye," he replied, "and it is invention, but if you can get at the truth of this matter by another road, just tell me your plan and I'll try it."

"'Deed," said I, "I see no better road than the one yer takin'—but——"

He took me up at my last word, and said a bit impatiently, "You tire me with that 'but.' Do you not see that if we had the truth before us, we would have no need of seeking for it?"

"Gang on wi' yer invention," said I. "I'm convinced that ye hae baith fact and reason to support it."

"Ah, Gillicuddy," he said, smiling, "you talk like a rational man, as you are. Now follow me closely. Here's the Lady of Glenhaugh living a life of ease and comfort in this same house. The life of the past is gone into oblivion as if it had never been. The story has never been told, as I can prove to you, and the new life has prospered, untouched with a shadow of fear. In the security and peace of



this happy existence—now mark me—there comes a visitor from the past, a voice from the grave, a ghost walks in, the devil comes forth with a shameful secret to tell, and the lady gets a packet. Is it not a startling thing, a thing to strike terror and shame and dismay to her heart? Let your memory carry you back to that day, Gillicuddy, and tell me, do the facts not bear me out in my reasoning? Was not this lady disturbed woefully?”

“Aye,” said I. “Yer words are truth, I canna doubt, for it comes back to me as though it were yesterday, the getting of that accursed packet.”

“Now, Gillicuddy,” he went on, after hearing me with much satisfaction, “the lady is to be exposed, her past is to be revealed. How will she explain her deceit, her life falsehood? What will the Laird think? Will he pardon her? Will his love be strong enough to withstand the shock of such a revelation? Will his mind see clear through the fogs of suggestive guilt and actual deceiving? And, Gillicuddy, there is another terrible thought, and it is this: Even if the love of the Laird will rise superior to this attack, how will it be if these two men meet? Suspicion, jealousy, hate, aye, murder itself, will surely follow.



What will she do? Just stop here, Gillicuddy, and try to think a bit of the state of mind this unfortunate woman is in. Can you picture it? If she tells the Laird all her story, can his love be trusted?"

"Aye, that it can," I cried, interrupting him, "for he was aye a man quick to forgive, and generous wi' his love."

"But," spoke up Sir Gilbert, "that arch-devil, raised from the bottomless pit, is threatening to step in at Glenhaugh. There's a situation for you, Gillicuddy. The Laird and Courtray will not agree. The Laird is an ugly man to cross, and Courtray is a wicked and a desperate one. The Laird's life is in the balance. Already he is a wronged man, a deceived man, a doomed man, and an angry man he will be. Ah, Gillicuddy, what will she do? There is but one thing, and no other to do. She will go to Courtray."

Sir Gilbert paused, and the two of us sat thinking. At last I spoke.

"Sir Gilbert, I'm wondering why my Lady left Glenhaugh as she did. What hoped she to accomplish wi' Courtray? Would it no', think ye, hae been as wise for her to hae bided at hame, and made a clean breast o' her troubles, and left Courtray to the deevil. I



see no guid reason for her leaving as she did. What was to be gained by it? Tell me that, if ye can. 'Deed she might hae met Courtray at her ain door?"

"Do you think it would have been a wholesome thing for the Laird and Courtray to come together?" asked Sir Gilbert.

"It would hae been a dreadfu' thing," I cried.

"Aye, that it would, Gillicuddy, and that my Lady well knew and feared. The coming together of these men would never do. It would mean death to one or both of them. Tell me, Gillicuddy, what, think you, would have been the consequences with Courtray face to face with the Laird, aye and Courtray with a story o' love, and deceit, and dishonor to tell of my Lady?"

"There would hae been the crossing o' swords," cried I. "There would hae been murder, I'm thinking."

"Aye," replied Sir Gilbert, "that and no other thing. My Lady knew well that the Laird would be stained with a horrid crime, or, more likely, lying dead at Courtray's feet. There was no other thing to do in the whole bad business but to keep these two from meeting, and it was for that my Lady left Glen-



haugh beset with shame, sorrow, fear, and despair."

"I believe ye, Sir Gilbert," said I; "but there's one thing that troubles me. What hoped my Lady to do wi' Courtray? What meant her mission to him?"

"I can answer that, Gillicuddy, though you may scoff at my answer. It was not of a verity to plead with Courtray. It was not to inform the French constabulary of Courtray's return, but—well, Gillicuddy, I'm thinking it was to do a desperate and dreadful thing, and that was no other than to send M. Courtray into the land of spirits, never to return. Aye, to do this for him with her own hand, and to follow after him to the grave, and so put an end to the whole evil and unfortunate matter, for she was a sorely driven and desperate woman."

"God forgie her!" cried I. "Ah, little thought had I when I saw my Lady last, clasping her wee Marion and raising her eyes to heaven so piteously, that sic a thought was in her mind, and sic a resolve was hers. Little thought I that she was bidding a last farewell to her bairn and leaving my Laird forever."

"Listen to me, Gillicuddy," said Sir Gilbert. "Your feelings do you credit; but I'm not



through with my story. My Lady agreed to Courtray's tryst, and even as she did it, down she sat and wrote the story of her wretched life to the Laird. She confessed all, and hid nothing. She put all her love and her truth in the letter, and leaving that confession for the Laird, off she posted to France."

Sir Gilbert stopped at this point, and knit his brows as though he had come to a difficulty, and as he paused, I was trembling with the excitement of my feelings. Neither of us spoke for a space, till at last Sir Gilbert put forth a question:

"Tell me, Gillicuddy," said he, "what took the Laird to France?"

"What took the Laird to France?" said I. "If ye tell me, Sir Gilbert, I'll tell you. I kenna what took him to France, but 'deed I hae sometimes thought that in his search for the packet, and he was like a madman wi' his eagerness at it, he must hae found a clew o' some kind that told him the secret o' his wife's journey, for it could hardly hae been chance that brought them together. Foreby it was after tearin' and scatterin' a' things in his quest for the packet that he got me out o' my bed, and before daybreak had set sail frae the pier o' Abbeyfont."



"Might it not have been the French packet he found, Gillicuddy?" asked Sir Gilbert.

"Would the Lady hae left it, think ye?" I asked.

"It's not reasonable to think it," he answered. "But what could have excited him to the pitch of frenzy and taken him to France in such haste, and not only to France but to the place of Courtray's tryst? Aye, it was Courtray's letter, and cunningly it was worded, and like to madden a man with jealous rage. Think of it coming to him in his frame of mind at the loss of his lady, and after the anxiety of the search. A letter cunningly planned with vows of love and insinuations of a compact both illicit and villainous. I'll swear it was the packet. Like a two-edged sword, Gillicuddy, that packet struck the twain and cut them apart, aye, and brought them together again. Aye, Gillicuddy, it was the packet, I'll be sworn, that took the Laird to France, as it took my Lady to France."

"And if what you say be true," said I, "what reason can ye find for the lady's leaving the packet o' Courtray's? It's no' like she would leave sic a thing for her husband to see. What would she leave Courtray's packet for?"



"Ah, Gillicuddy," said he, "you puzzle me with that question. I'm e'en of your way of thinking, and damn me if I can give an answer that has reason to support it, but in the devil's name, what then sent the Laird to France to the very spot that Courtray named? It's a puzzle, the whole crooked matter, and if I feared not to bring more trouble upon Glenhaugh, it's the Laird himself I would seek to get an answer from."

"Sir Gilbert, for the love o' heaven, I charge ye no' to speak to the Laird. Better to let the matter drop than to bring mair evil to pass. It's a sair subject to him."

"Well, Gillicuddy," he replied, "let us begin to grope in the dark again. Let us say that the Lady in the excitement and distress of that evil time, with the fear of Courtray and the fear of the Laird, and the leave-taking of her wee lass, and the terrible hurly-burly and anxiety of it all, just mislaid Courtray's letter, or hid it, or lost it, for it must have been left behind, and I think it was but an accident that left it. Let us say it was by one of these chances that it came about to fall into the Laird's hands, for of a very truth it was no other thing that sent the Laird to France, aye, sent him, mad with disappointment and jealous



rage, to the very spot of meeting named by Courtray."

I interrupted him here, and said: "Sir Gilbert, ye speak wi' some reason, but ye'll no' forget that the lady left Glenhaugh weeks before the Laird. There's the matter o' time to be accounted for. How cam' they together at the set time?"

"And that is a puzzle to me, Gillicuddy," he said, "but let us say that the lady's imprisonment at Boulogne is to be considered, and that the Laird, posting to Versailles, came strangely enough upon the pair, in the nick of time, but that's a speculation we must accept as but a whim of Fate."

"I dinna like the whim o' Fate," said I.

"No more do I," said he, "but it's not a matter essential in itself, for you see, Gillicuddy, the meeting of the three was a fact."

"I see no way but to accept your reasoning," said I; "but 'deed I wish there were less speculation and mair fact in it a'; but let it stand as ye say, and hear me, Sir Gilbert, for I hae another puzzling question for ye. What hae ye to say o' the letter the Lady wrote to the Laird, explaining her story? I'm wonderin' to hear o' it."

"And hear of it you will," he cried.



When he had said this he just looked at me with the most impudent smile, and leaving the matter as though it were but a trifle we were discussing, began humming a bit of French music. Then he pushed the bottle over to me, and said :

“ Gillicuddy, before we go deeper into this matter, what think you of another sup of the liquor? ”



## CHAPTER XVI.

“ I THINK YOU ARE BUT A DOURE MAN.”

SIR GILBERT’S impudence and freedom were past bounds I thought, and I was fast losing patience with him, when he began again :

“ Gillicuddy, you’re a Greek scholar, I hear. What think you of Socrates? ”

“ ’Deed he was a wise man,” said I, and I added significantly, “ I wish there were mair like him in these days.”

He roared so loud with laughter, and grew so red in the face when I said this, that I feared he would fall in a fit.

“ Gillicuddy, was it not Socrates that bothered the Athenians with questions? ” said he, when he recovered speech.

“ Aye,” said I, “ but there was a purpose to them.”

“ Well,” said he, “ for all their purpose the poor old philosopher was forced to drink the poisonous hemlock; but, Gillicuddy, listen to me, and to perdition with Socrates. I am



ready to answer a hard question you puzzled me with not five minutes syne. If I am of fair memory your words were: 'What have you to say of the letter the Lady wrote to the Laird explaining her story?' Were not these your words?"

"They were," said I shortly.

"Then," said he, "I'll answer them for you, but in my own way. Now mark me. I think I heard you speak of a bit repair you made to the West Tower."

"Aye," said I, "but, in the name o' sense, what has a bit stone masonry to do wi' the Laird's troubles? Ye're off at your speculations again. Ah, Sir Gilbert, ye hae a fine imagination, but I like facts mair than speculations."

"Speculations," cried he, "speculations! and what other thing is there to do but speculate? Let me appeal to your reason, Gillicuddy, with a bit more of speculation, and we'll get to the bottom of the matter, never fear; but if you shut your mind against it, you may e'en grope and gang to your grave groping. Damn me, how other than by speculation know you that it was the Lady of Glenhaugh that got her death at Versailles? It is true I saw the woman pierced through the body with a mortal



thrust, but, indeed, as I never in my life had seen the lady before, I could not swear it was she. I can swear to all the rest, though, to Courtray's story of the Scotch Laird, to the meeting of Courtray and the woman, and to the reality of the Laird with the bloody deed upon his head. Is it not speculation that gives that woman a name, and calls her the wife of the Laird? Ah, Gillicuddy, with all your astuteness, I think you are but a doure man when you scorn a bit speculation. But to my answer to your question. Now as to the work on the West Tower."

"Deil tak' the west tower!" I cried, for I was grown impatient with him. "I'm mair bent on stickin' to the matter o' the Lady's letter to the Laird."

Sir Gilbert laughed till he was red in the face, and after he had gotten his breath again, he asked:

"What man went down into the chimney hole you found in the tower?"

"What recks it what man went doon? But if you will be answered, the stone mason Sawney McBride. Ye ask but foolish questions," said I.

"Gillicuddy," said he, "you're a man of gifts, but you have a great fault."



“And what may that be?” I asked, a bit nettled.

“You are far too apt to despise the value of trifles,” said he.

I was sorely puzzled at his words, and just about to give him a reproof for what I thought was his impudent levity, when he asked me:

“Did any other man go down into the chimney hole?”

“Aye,” said I, “one Tammy Jamieson, a worthless half-wit.”

“And what found he there?” he asked.

“The smell o’ soot,” said I, “and naething mair.”

“What brought he back with him?” said he.

“Naught that I could see,” I answered, “but a dirty face and hands.”

“Well, Gillicuddy, I have one more question to ask: Who went down first, Sawney or Tammy?”

“Tammy,” said I, “and found naething.”

“And that’s where you are far mistaken,” he answered; “for Tammy found more than the smell of soot, and brought back more than a dirty face and hands. He found the letter the Lady left for the Laird.”

“Is that a bit speculation?” I asked.



"Just bide a bit," said he. "Now mark me, Gillicuddy. The writing was left by the Lady on the oak cabinet, I've heard you tell about, and what with your decking of the cabinet with vines and wreaths for the Lady's home-coming, and what with your haste and anxious confusion at her loss, it was pushed into the crack you tell about and lost in the chimney hole."

I was surprised at his reasoning, you may well believe, but I was far from being satisfied with it; so I said:

"I'd like a bit fact to mix wi' that speculation."

"You shall have it," said he. "Hearken. You see, Gillicuddy, I have not been idle since I got back from France, and as there was little to get from the steward's confidence, I had to take up with the best I could, and I have to thank your friend with the long nose and the watery eyes for some valuable information."

"You mean Geordie Gillespie," said I, "and he is but a blethering fule."

"By George, it's a fact," said he, using Geordie's very words, so natural like that I was fain to laugh for all my seriousness.

"Geordie Gillespie," he went on, "had many a story to tell, and among the rest was



one he told about the Laird's getting a letter to read at old Tibbie Jamieson's hut."

"I heard o' it," I said.

"Did you," said he, "and what think you was that letter?"

"I never fashed mysel' aboot it," I answered him. "I had mair than the blether o' an idiot to trouble me."

"Well, Gillicuddy," cried he, "that letter was the lady's letter to her husband, the Laird, and Tam Jamieson got it in the old chimney hole, and it was from him that Tibbie got it."

"And is that a bit o' speculation?" I asked.

He looked at me with the strangest look in his face, as if he wondered to hear me speak with so little respect of his speculations. After a moment's space he took the bottle before him and poured out a glass. "I think, Gillicuddy, I'll drink a health to you," said he, "so here's to you, and may the Lord keep you ever in the ways of innocence and simplicity."

I was angry with him at this, for I counted it a piece of his sneering insolence, so I arose and gave him a bit of my mind.

"Sir Gilbert," said I, "I dinna think ye need mak' a fool o' me who hae kept the affairs o' this house as I hae. It is true ye hae brought news to me that but for you I would perhaps



never hae kenned, but let me say that the news ye bring doesna give ye warrant to tak' the Laird's affairs in yer keepin' and judge either the Laird or mysel' by what ye ca' yer speculative methods. If ye had mair innocence and simplicity yoursel', yer imagination wouldna carry ye so far into speculations, but keep ye steadier to facts."

He never winced under the lash of my words, but took all with a most amiable pleasantness that was exasperating, and, when he had heard me through, he said with the fairest manner:

"Gillicuddy, I ne'er meant to hurt your feelings; I have too much respect for you as a man with a good heart and a loyal principle, but I think you are a bit too set in your views, and jealous of your interest in the Laird's affairs, and like to be feared of interference in the Laird's matters. I have but one thing more to say, and that is touching this letter that Tam Jamieson found in the chimney hole, and which I said was the letter old Tibbie showed the Laird. You doubt that that was the Lady's letter, I'm thinking?"

"I think it is but what you hae speculated," I said, "and puts me in mind o' the dagger Macbeth saw before him."



“ Well, Gillicuddy, as you are a man fond of facts,” said Sir Gilbert, “ what think you of a material thing like this,” and as he spoke he took from his side pocket a bit of paper, a mere fragment that had been crumpled and torn from a larger sheet, and handed it to me. I took it and looked at it to recognize, without doubt, the well-known hand-writing of my Lady. Few were the words indeed, but their meaning was clear to me.

“ Read it, Gillicuddy,” said Sir Gilbert, bending eagerly toward me, “ read it and tell me what you think now of a bit material fact? ”

I was trembling with emotion as I read aloud, at his bidding, these words: “ *I have told you all. To hide from you the shameful story of that infamous being who has risen from the grave was the wrong I did. Retribution and expiation are before me. Pity and forgive and pray for me.* ”

I bowed my head, and the paper shook in my trembling fingers. For a space no word passed between us. At last I turned to Sir Gilbert, who was gravely watching me:

“ And where got ye this paper? ” I asked.

“ From Geordie Gillespie,” said he. “ You see I had a great friend in Geordie, and much he told me of the Laird’s affairs. Among the



rest, there was an account of the Laird's woeful trouble after he came back that night from Tibbie's cottage, when he fell in a fit and you alarmed the house and Geordie helped you to lay him in his bed. You see Geordie picked up a bit paper that fell from the Laird's clenched hand. He put it in his pouch intending to hand it to you, Gillicuddy, for he was of a mind that it was in some way connected with the Laird's terrible state, but you were a hard man to get at, and a bit short in the temper with him, and not like to favor him or to listen to him, so he just put the matter by, and the paper was in his keeping, hidden and unread, till my confidence with him and a drop of good liquor brought it forth. You'll not think ill of me, Gillicuddy, for not speaking of it earlier in our conference. It gave me a fine backing for my speculations."

I sat for a moment or two thinking, and then, reaching forth my hand to Sir Gilbert, I said, "If I hae spoken an ill word or misjudged ye, I ask yer forgiveness."

"Let us take a sup of the liquor," quoth he.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE REMORSE OF A GREAT WRONG.

BEFORE Sir Gilbert and I got to bed the cocks were beginning to crow, and before I fell asleep my estimate of him had vitally changed.

You may be sure I felt ashamed at the way I had used him; not only had I been short of speech with him, but oftentimes had just snubbed him in a manner both contemptuous and formal, and in it all he had never given me back but the fairest words, and indeed I do think my churlish way with him had provoked in him more amusement than anger.

As I lay in bed that night thinking over all that had passed between Sir Gilbert and myself, the mystery of the Laird's trouble was an open book to me, and I could read it from beginning to end, and it was Sir Gilbert I had to thank for opening the sealed volume.

Going back over all the strange events of the time, I saw clearly the relationship of all the circumstances, and I could now account for



the conduct of my master and know those heretofore hidden causes of his woeful behavior. No wonder that despair and revenge should craze him with a passion to destroy the woman who had deceived him and wrecked his happiness. Not a base passion of revenge, but the passion of a great soul aghast at the magnitude of wrong and quick to punish. No wonder that he heard the voice of a spirit speaking to him. It was the yearning of his own heart, eloquent in its passionate desire to hear a voice of forgiveness for a wrong sadly repented. His wandering was the outcome of the same intense yearning of his soul ever seeking to hear an answer from the spirit land that would give rest to the penitent, pleading heart. Aye, the very stars he looked up to were emblems of the pure life he had wronged, and in them he saw some far-distant waiting spirit that, beyond this world, would receive him with pity and love and pardon.

For all my sorrow for my dear master, I cannot but confess that I was sorely harassed at the thought of the great wrong he had done; aye, and the great and woeful wickedness of it. There were moments, too, when the awful whisper was in my soul that my master was a man stained with the crime of murder.



Ah, that ever such a thought should come to me was indeed terrible, but yet there it was, and my master, he whom I had loved so well, and ever exalted in my heart as the best and most gentle master and friend, was still a man whose hands were red with the blood of an awful deed. There was a horror of it all upon me, and my faith and love were both like to be wrecked when I dwelt upon it, yet, when I thought of his cruel deed, I could only think of the cruelty of it falling upon himself; I could only think of him as a victim himself, made by the strain of harrowing trouble to be the doer of a crime that was the saddest punishment a man could suffer.

It was the next morning after my long sitting with Sir Gilbert that, going along the lower hall, I met him coming toward me. He was walking with his hands under his coat-tails, and singing a scrap of some French ditty. He stopped and gave me a grand salutation, and his manner was as blithe and careless as if there was never a care in the world, and never a prospect of ill to bother him, or an evil memory to haunt him. Singing as merry as a bird he was, while I went about my duties with a heart sober and sad, and a mind ill at rest, for the story of my master's secret, so light a mat-



ter to Sir Gilbert, troubled me more than all else that had come to me through our evil days.

“Gillicuddy,” said he, “I’m thinking of skipping off for a month or two just for a bit of pleasure, as you may say. I’m getting down in the dumps for want of some blithe company. Lord knows, Gillicuddy, I have enjoyed your fellowship with relish, and I’ve gotten great profit of mind from it; but you are a man of a sober mind, and Glenhaugh grows dull for a restless rover like me, so I’ll take a season for chasing butterflies in the sunshine of some other field with some ranting cronies like myself. The matter we were speaking of is at an end, and no more can be said. We have the Laird’s story between us, and I think it is in safe keeping. The whole matter is just this: The Lady of Glenhaugh is dead and gone, my friend Courtray, alias Picot, is a headless ghost, and the Laird, your master, is a living dead man. The secret of the past is known to three, and, Gillicuddy, with me it’s a dead secret, and with you it’s the same, and as for the Laird, it will go to the grave with him. Here’s a hand, Gillicuddy, a hand of fellowship and good faith. I’ll pine for you, and when I get back, we’ll have a bottle and talk of more lively matters.”



He clapped me on the back heartily, and off he went to make preparations for his leave-taking.

In my speech with Sir Gilbert I had told him the essence of many things touching the Laird and his manner of life, and with these I had told him as well of the Laird's wandering and of my own experience in the glen. He laughed aloud, I well remember, when I related the horrors I had felt, crouching in the darkness surrounded by wraiths and eldrich creatures that had set the cold sweat trickling on my body, and when I had given him an account of my getting free from the haunted glen by crawling on my knees, with my heart in my mouth, he had slapped his hand on his leg again and again, and just roared and roared so lustily that he was like to burst a blood vessel with merriment.

"Ah, Gillicuddy," cried he, I remember, "I think you'll just be the death of me with your tales of the supernatural. Man, I wonder you got safely back again. If the devil had got astride of you, Gillicuddy, he'd have ridden you to hell. Aye, but you had a happy deliverance, I'm pleased at that, but I must just have a bit laugh when I think of such a sober and respectable Christian man as Adam Gillicuddy





HE CLAPPED ME ON THE BACK HEARTILY.







down on all-fours, running a race with a score of his own phantasmagoria."

It had not been to my liking to have Sir Gilbert get so much merriment out of my plight, so I had just kept silence on the matter of my further adventures that night, and told him not a word of what I had seen of Tibbie and Tibbie's double, for I was indeed now much of his opinion that it was all a phantasmagoria, as he called it, and but a creation of my disordered and over-wrought mind.

It was not till the afternoon that Sir Gilbert got off from Glenhaugh, and when I had seen him down the approach to the Abbeyfont high-road, he said to me: "Gillicuddy, I have bidden farewell to the Laird and had a long crack with him, and, my certie, I'm not so firm in my belief that he's a daft man, for, before God, he's as wise and rational of speech as any man I e'er met."

"Ye spoke na o' the troubles?" I asked with some anxiety.

"Tut, man!" said he, "not I; but, Gillicuddy, this secret is wearing sorely on him. He'll need your care, but I fear not for long, for what he is hiding is killing him."

I could not keep a tear from falling as he spoke, and I turned away to hide it.



Sir Gilbert got down from his horse, and coming to me, said: "Gillicuddy, I must shake your hand again. There, man, and let me say to you, you're not to remember me with unkindness for aught amiss in me, for I have a heart warm to you, and, indeed, I could love you like a brother."

He shook my hand warmly and with a glistening eye; but in an instant he tossed his head with a careless motion, and humming a scrap of some lively air, got on his horse and went down the highroad like a cavalier charging at a tournament, and the last I saw of him he was speeding along the road, urging his nag in a mad gallop.

After he had gone out of sight I went back to the house again wearily enough, to take up the duties before me, and indeed I felt as if a companion of worth and cleverness had left me, and that Glenhaugh would be drearier far without the company of Sir Gilbert.

The rest of the day was dull enough. The morning had dawned in gray clouds, and cheerless had been the mood of nature as the hours went by. I was oppressed with all things within and without, and I could have sat down in some lonely spot and wept like a child. Toward evening the gloom of the day deepened,



and its depression seemed to rest upon every creature, as if the spirit of melancholy had taken up its abode with us.

It was late in the afternoon when Marion came tripping to me, saying her father would speak to me; so off I went, and when I came to his door he bade me enter. I found him sitting alone, and his attitude was that of a man heart-broken and despairing. He was never more than a sad man, but to-day I could see the clouds were heavy over him. He sat on a low stool, and was bent forward with his face buried in his hands, and when I entered, he never made a movement or uttered a word. The picture of sorrow he was, sitting there, and my heart went out to him with a yearning of tenderness and sympathy.

"Are ye no' feelin' weel the day?" I asked.

He never looked up, but answered with a pitiful despair in his tone: "Oh, Gillicuddy, I'll ne'er be weel again."

Well I knew his trouble, but I dared not touch it, so in my nervous haste to dissemble, I stammered like a simpleton and ventured to say: "'Deed, if it's an ailment o' the body ye hae, there's Dr. Smilie at Abbeyfont ready at yer ca'."



He looked up at me, wondering to hear me speak such foolish words, and then, with a smile on his face, made answer: "Gillicuddy, ye hae the best o' intentions, and wad like to shield me frae the thoughts o' the past, and the agony o' them, I ken fine; but I'm no' a bairn, so dinna let yer kindness o' heart interfere wi' yer sincerity wi' me. Weel ye ken that my trouble is no' o' the body, but o' a mair serious kind, a sore disease o' the mind and heart and soul, and there's no physician can cure me o' the trouble I suffer."

Little he knew how much of his trouble I knew; little he knew that, looking at him, I saw the picture of a wild tumult of raging madness storming at the doors of a King's palace, and, in that sea of passion, beheld one frantic madman, no other than he who sat before me, fleeing wildly from the place with the blood of a wife red on his soul.

I am sure my master gave me credit for a great sincerity, and for a truly devout spirit, when, after a silence, I said to him: "My dear master, there is a great physician o' souls ever ready to hearken to the ca' o' his creatures, and he has given his word that he is ever near to those that are o' a broken and contrite spirit."



He looked up to me, and said: "Aye, Gillicuddy, and that is true, indeed, for I think it maun be that I hae had great strength given to me to come through what I hae suffered. I hae lived, I think, to suffer a great punishment for a great wrong that I hae no' the mind to tell ye o'. I must e'en suffer, for I deserve the chastisement, but, oh, I'm weary, weary o' it, and wad fain begin a new life. Ah, but I'm sair forfouchten and weary. I hae looked for death to come, but he's no' like to come my road, and I think at times, if it were no' for the righteousness I ken there is in God's wrath, I couldna thole to bide and suffer."

Ah, but my master was a grand man, I thought, and a brave one, and I thanked God fervently for giving him strength to bear his burdens of sorrow and sin and remorse with such a grand fortitude.

He paused for a space, and then went on as though speaking to himself, though he spoke my name from time to time:

"I hae seen a bit o' trouble, Gillicuddy, and this heart o' mine has passed through the fires o' hell wi' its burnin' passions. I hae been like a frail bark adrift upon a wild ocean o' wide expanse and immeasurable deeps, wi' chaos and confusion swirling aroon me; aye,



and the sky flashing oot ugly fire-gleams. Ah, but I hae seen sair distress o' foul weather, and the memory o' it is like a blight on me. I hae filled the volume o' the past wi' a wheen pages that arena comforting for me to read. I fain wad close the book and lay it doon forever and forget the story it tells, and yet, Gillicuddy, there are a wheen pages in it o' fair reading, and lines that speak o' love and hope and happiness." His voice sank to a piteous moan, and as he bent low with his face in his hands, I heard him sobbing.

Ah, what could I say to him? There was no thought within me to speak of hope or joy, knowing what I knew. There was but one consolation I knew he could receive, and that was a spiritual one, for I could see that he was as a man who had loosened from him the ties of earth, and was standing, as it were, on life's last verge amid gathering night-shadows and silence, listening to hear a voice calling in the mysterious distance before him.

I could find no words to speak, and just waited mute, for my mind was awed with solemnity, as though I stood at a death-bed, At last my master lifted his head, and there was a tone of rapture in his voice that gave me a thrill of awe.





"I HAE GIVEN YE A SAD HEART," HE SAID, RISING TO HIS FEET.







“ Oh, Gillicuddy, but I yearn to hear the cry that cometh at midnight, and to gang into the marriage feast. I’d fain slip oot o’ time and into eternity. And, Gillicuddy, I hae heard aften and aften a voice that ca’s me there. Aye, it’s a sweet voice I hear, and a voice I ken weel. I hae heard it in my soul whisperin’ to me, I hae heard it in the wind as it went by me. In the night it has spoken to me, and once it cried to me in the glen, and ca’ed me, again and again. Do ye ken, Gillicuddy, it’s a spirit that speaks, the spirit o’ her I ca’ed my wife. Oh, Gillicuddy, I maun gang to her, I maun speak to her, and tell her o’ a’ I hae suffered, crying for pardon, for oh, but I’m humbled and sair heart-broken. Ye can ne’er ken the things I micht tell, the secret that is hidden here, the passion and the sin, the horror and the pain; for if ye did yer love wad turn frae me.”

Well, well I knew the secret that was there, aye, and the passion and the sin of it; but far, far was my love from turning from him. That he had been driven by the storms of adversity beyond the responsibility of a human creature, that he had been beset, as he truly said, by sore foul weather of passion and madness, that he had been deceived and misguided, and had done a deed of horror I knew, but



never could I find blame for him, and never was it in my heart to think ill of him, but to pity him, as I hope God will pity me.

“ I hae given ye a sad heart,” he said, rising to his feet, “ but I pray God ye’ll ne’er hae the sadness o’ heart I hae this day, and hae had for mony a day. I hae let ye into the sanctuary o’ my grief, Gillicuddy, and I hae breathed to ye a secret thing that it is no’ for me to mak’ mair plain. Ye’ll no’ think ill o’ me for that. I canna explain it, but this day there was something in me that bade me seek yer sympathy; a touch o’ that sweet and gentle human kindness that was aince mine, and which has come back to me this day like an echo o’ a tender melody o’ the days o’ my happiness. I think that the spirit o’ her I loved so weel has been near me this day. Shake my hand, Gillicuddy, and tell me wi’ a true heart, could ye find it in yer soul to forgie me if I had done ye a great and cruel wrang, and had suffered for it keenly, and had come to ye at last on my knees, crushed wi’ sorrow at it, asking for yer pardon, and yer pity, and yer love? ”

“ Aye, my ain guid master,” I cried, “ that I could wi’ a’ my heart, as God is my ‘hope,” and as I said the words, I threw my arms about his neck, and just wept like a bairn, leaning my



head on his breast. For a space there was silence, and then, as he sat down and answered me nothing, I left him; but I saw that his face was lightened up, and that my love had cheered him.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

“I HAE A MESSAGE FOR YE.”

WHEN I left my master it was drawing on to the evening, and the darkness was beginning to gather. I had such a weight on my mind, with the melancholy converse I had had with my poor master, following upon the evil affairs I had gotten from Sir Gilbert, that I could not get myself to any duty, but just wandered aimlessly out into the court and down the approach to the Abbeyfont highway, and stood there as lonely and miserable a man as might be.

As I stood there, Esther Ricalton, coming from some errand at the Pinlawn clachan, turned in at the approach, and I gave her good-evening.

“I’m thinkin’ it will be a wat nicht,” she said, pausing when she saw me, “the clouds are unco’ black and heavy aff o’er the Abbey glen, and there’s a watery sough in the wind.”



"Aye," said I, "I'd no' say but there'll be mair than a mist before mornin'."

"I see they hae left a licht burnin' for me at the hall gate," she said, glancing up the shadowy approach toward the house, that loomed a great, gray mass in the fast gathering shadows, lighted only by one yellow flame that flickered from a lamp hanging over the servants' hall.

"It's a cheery blink o' welcome for me," she went on, "but my sooth, Maister Gillicuddy, the Glenhaugh hoose is no' so bright wi' fire and licht as I hae aften seen it. Mair's the pity for the evil that has fallen upon the hoose and its Laird."

"Ah, weel," said I. "It's no wealth o' gear, or guid name, that can bar a door against ill fortune."

"Tell me," said Esther, "has ony news o' my Lady been broucht to my Laird?"

"Never a word," said I, uneasy in my mind at my answer.

"Is it no' like, think ye, Maister Gillicuddy," said she, "that the Laird looks for her back again?"

"Mair like," I said, "that his heid will be bent doon wi' sorrow for lang years to come, and his gray hairs gang to the grave ere she



come back. My Lady is deid lang syne, and will ne'er come back, and there's an end o' it, Esther."

"Och, wae's me for my Lady," she said, sorrowfully, "and God pity the Laird."

As she spoke the wind came sougling down from the hillside with a long dreary wail, and in my ears it sounded, I bethought me, like a voice of mourning, bewailing the pitiful fate of my Lady, and the sore distress and evil doom that had fallen upon Glenhaugh. With the wind came a dash of rain, and I felt it beating on my face.

"Ye'll do weel to tak' shelter," said I, "get ye in to the fireside, lass, and seek what cheer ye can, for 'deed there be clouds and rain baith inside and oot at Glenhaugh this nicht."

"I'll heed yer advice," said she, "for I feel the spits o' rain on my face. So a guid nicht to ye, Maister Gillicuddy," and as she spoke she hurried up the approach, and left me standing in the gloom alone.

The rain was still flying on each gust of wind when later I went up the approach to the house, and when I had gotten there I heard it pattering on the paved court-yard. Before I entered the house, I stopped to look up at the sky, stretching black overhead, and to listen



to the wrack of the night. A steady murmur of wind and a seething of distant rain came down from the hills, and far away up the slopes back of Glenhaugh, I could hear the rippling and gurgling of mountain streams setting in to make a night of it. Ah, but it was a night of gloom, and when I looked in the murk toward the hills where the storm was brewing and gathering, I pictured the terrors of the night deep in the hollows of the glen, with the groaning of woods and the shrieking of winds in the eerie solitudes where the wraith of St. Cuthbert guarded the Cairn. Like a solitary spirit of the gloom, I stood listening, while the night uttered its voices to me, and behind me the house of Glenhaugh, engulfed in shadow, slept under the black sky, lulled by the wind and the rain.

Suddenly I saw before me, not three paces away, a figure blacker than the night emerge out of the dense midnight gloom and glide toward me. At the sight of it my flesh began to creep and my pulse to beat with terror. I was about to utter a cry and flee before it, when I was stayed by a whisper, husky and trembling.

"Ah, but it's a pitiless nicht, a hard and pitiless nicht for a body o' my years to be



abroad in. I hae come a weary road to see ye, Maister Gillicuddy."

I knew the voice; it was Tibbie Jamieson's, and I cried:

"And what brings ye here at sic a time, and on sic a nicht?"

"Wheest, man!" she said, drawing close to me, and in the shadows there was something uncanny and fearsome in her presence that made me fear her beyond words. "Wheest!" she whispered, "I've something to say to ye that isna for ither ears. Come near to me, for it maunna be heard by ither ears that micht be listenin'. Come awa frae the hoose."

"I'll just do fine where I am," I said, drawing back from her, and wishing myself safe indoors with the rest of the Glenhaugh household.

"Listen to me," she said, "I'm no' here for naught at sic an hour, and in sic deil's weather. Ye maun hearken to me, or there will be waur than rain to fa' the nicht."

"Speak oot, woman, what mean ye?" I said.

She came close to me and, putting forth her trembling hand, took me by the sleeve, and, reaching forth her face so near to mine that I could see, in the blinking hall light, her hollow



eyes and sunken cheeks, she whispered in a voice of secrecy awful to hear:

"I hae a message for ye."

"A message, and frae whatna body is it?" I asked, feeling her trembling grip on me.

She clutched me tightly, and bringing her face near to mine, whispered in my ear:

"A message frae my Lady, she that was my Lady o' Glenhaugh."

Her words sent a qualm of terror over me, and I drew away from her, as if her grip were the touch of the dead.

"Awa wi' ye, ye fearsome woman," I gasped. "My Lady's in her grave."

"Wheest," she said, "she's back again, and gin ye come wi' me, ye'll hae speech wi' her."

"In the name o' God," I cried, "are ye a mortal that speaks to me! My Lady canna come frae her grave."

"Hoots, man," she said, "hearken to me. I'm mortal like yerself; for a' the ill that's said o' me. My Lady ne'er went to the grave. I hae seen her wi' these een o' mine and hae spoken to her, aye, and hae come frae her this nicht to bid ye gang to her. She's back at Glenhaugh a living woman, and a puir, broken-hearted woman, and a sick woman, and this



is the word she speaks: 'Gang and bring Gillicuddy to me, an he wad speak to me.' Here, man, is a bit paper I was to pit into yer hand as a token." She held in her hand a piece of crumpled paper, and I took it.

"Gang to the licht wi' it," she said, "and I'll bide here till ye come back; but mind, no man is to ken o' this but yersel'; that was her last word to me."

As she spoke she drew her cloak about her, and muttered shiveringly: "Ah, but it's a pitiless nicht."

In a terrible frame of mind I went into the house, and, lighting a candle in the hall, I opened the crumpled paper, and there, as I live, was my Lady's hand I knew so well, and these words written:

*"Come to me, Gillicuddy, in the name of heaven, without delay, and say no word, I charge you, to any soul. Tibbie Jamieson will bring you to me. Delay not, for I would see you at once."*

I put my hand to my head, and I could feel my temples throbbing. Was I gone mad? Had my anxieties shaken my reason? I thought of the words of my master. He had said, as I well remembered, that "he had heard the sound of her voice, and the words of her



mouth." Was the spirit of my Lady among us, wandering materialized in our midst?

Scarcely knowing what I did I went out again, dazed and bewildered. The wind was now grown fierce, and the rain was driving before it, and the tumult of the night was so great that I could hear no word, nor yet be heard in speech; but, Tibbie moving away like a shadow, I followed by her side, dumb with the spell of wonder and fear upon me, and into the great howling black pit of the night we went forth, and getting to the Abbeyfont road we turned toward Pinlawn, and when we had come to the hollow of the glen, there into the pitch-black depth of midnight we turned and began to toil up the winding path toward St. Cuthbert's Cairn, and I knew we were making our way toward Tibbie's cottage.

Ah, but there was enough to strike terror into the soul of any mortal in this journey up the glen, and as for myself, I think there was no moment when I ceased from trembling as I followed this crooked old woman through the deep, dark murk.

At times I was conscious of some object moving with me, a blacker shadow than the shadows around me, and again I would feel the fluttering of her cloak as it touched



me, but no word passed between us, for the voices of the night forbade it, and only at times was I certain that she was still the guide to my steps, and that was when she stopped and put forth her palsy-shaken hand to touch me.

“Where was I going?” I asked myself. The answer set me to shivering. “To have speech with my Lady of Glenhaugh.” Was my Lady in the land of the living? That could not be; for Sir Gilbert had seen her thrust through with a mortal stab on that terrible day at Versailles, and my master’s sorrows and remorse had been the outcome of that bloody deed. Had not Tibbie herself long since startled me with the fearsome question: “Can the deid no’ come oot o’ the cauld grave, think ye?” What could it mean! What devilish and grewsome errand was I making at midnight in this howling tempest, with this hag of Satan?

Once I stopped and was about to turn back and flee from her in the darkness, but I remembered the words of the paper I still clutched in my trembling hand. Ah, that was a strange message I held, and no other than the hand of the living had penned it, and no other than my Lady, or my mind, weak and shat-



tered by all I had seen, was deceiving me and leading me on to madness.

It was a long and dreary journey we had, buffeted by the wind and wet by the rain, when at last in the pitchy darkness a light shone upon us, and I knew we were near our journey's end, for the gleam before us was from the window of Tibbie's cottage.

When we had come as far as the threshold Tibbie lifted the latch and opened the door, and in the light of the flickering fagots burning in the fireplace, the bent old woman stood leaning upon her stick and beckoning me to enter.



## CHAPTER XIX.

“ I THANK GOD FOR THE NEWS YOU  
BRING ME.”

As Tibbie stood in the light of the fagots that flared upon her, and beckoned me to enter her dwelling, I trembled as if with the ague, dreading to know what was to be revealed; but I conquered my fears, and crossed the threshold, and the door closed behind me in a gust of wind.

When I entered Tibbie shuffled toward the fire, and, turning toward me, stretched out her arm, pointing a trembling finger, and said: “ She is there, that wad see ye.”

I looked in the direction she indicated into the room adjoining, and the fitful light of the low fire starting up, it flashed sharply upon a woman's face, and I saw the features of my lost Lady of Glenhaugh.

“ God keep me,” cried I, “ am I looking at my Lady? ” She came forward, her hand extended to me, and in great and trembling emo-



tion I grasped it and pressed it to my lips, while I sank upon my knees before her.

"Aye, Master Gillicuddy," she said sadly, "it's none other you are looking at. Little you thought to see me in this place."

The voice was my Lady's, but, oh, it was changed. Weak and weary it was, and it sounded faint and low, sinking to a husky whisper. I looked up into her face, and in the pale, wan features and the great beautiful eyes, there was the spirit of melancholy and suffering, so eloquently appealing to me that I could contain my feelings no longer, but just burst into tears and bowed my head, while grief and sympathy throbbed in my heart past control.

At last while I bent before her, speechless (for my emotion forbade utterance of words), she spoke to me:

"Tell me, Master Gillicuddy, tell me, in heaven's mercy, what of the Laird? What of my"—she paused, suspending her question, and I felt her fingers tighten upon my hand which still held hers—"what of my husband, and what of my wee lass Marion? Speak to me, Gillicuddy, speak of them to me."

"Thanks be to God, my Lady," said I, "they're baith in health and strength, and oh, but sair they hae missed ye."



She gave forth a cry that was the wail of a heart sorely o'ercharged with grief. At the sound, I looked up into her face, and my heart went out anew to her in compassionate tenderness. Ah, but she was a beautiful woman, and like a creature of another world she looked, ethereal and spirit-like, as the fire-glow shone faintly upon her from the outer room, where Tibbie sat bent over the fagots, rubbing her chilled knuckles and muttering to herself.

I could see that fell sickness had been my Lady's lot, and she showed the marks of cruel, cruel pain and trouble, yet she was as sweet and lovely to look upon as an angel of paradise, I thought. Her proud face was pale like death, and her cheeks were thin, but lovely she still was and saintlike, and when I saw her white hands clasped upon her breast, and her grand gray eyes turned upward, as if she thanked heaven for my words, I thought my heart would break, thinking of all she had suffered, poor unfortunate woman.

After I had mastered composure enough to speak again, I said:

"Why are ye, my Lady, in this place, and how in God's name cam' ye here? We hae thought ye dead and gone lang syne, and sairly hae we missed ye and mourned ye."



"And did he tell you my story?" she asked, looking at me eagerly and fearfully.

"Not he, my Lady. Ah, not he!" I said.

I saw her lips trembling, and then, as if she spoke to herself with no listener but her own heart, I caught the words she spoke:

"Oh, a cruel, cruel man he was!" and as she said the words she clasped her hands to her forehead in passionate despair, and moaned piteously.

Little heart had I to distress her, but I could not hear her speak those words unanswered, so with gentleness and pity in my tone, I said:

"Nay, my Lady, dinna say that. Never a cruel man was he, but a gentle and a just. And a man sairly tried wi' evil chance was he, and oh, but a heart-broken man is he this day."

She opened her eyes wide and fixed them upon me, as if my words amazed her past reason. "Master Gillicuddy," said she, "you see I have suffered, and you would not add to my suffering, I know. Little mercy or kindness would it be to dissemble where truth could not add to my troubles."

"'Deed, my dear Lady," answered I, "little I dissemble. It is but the truth I speak; as God is my judge, I speak the truth."

She smiled as I spoke, and shook her head



slowly, as though she trusted me, and yet felt that little I knew of the truth.

“Ah, Master Gillicuddy,” she said, after a pause, “little you know of my story. That day I left Glenhaugh I left a letter to the Laird. It told the secret of my leave-taking, but of the things that followed you cannot know, for he dared not speak them, and I cannot tell. Ah, Master Gillicuddy, when you say he was never a cruel man, you speak of what you cannot know.”

I broke in on her words, stopping her even as she spoke. “Ah, my Lady, I ken mair than ye do yersel’. It is ye that doesna ken. Ah, little ken ye a’ the things that I can tell.”

She never let her eyes pass from my face, but partly rising from the chair where she had seated herself, and leaning forward, she caught at my words, and cried eagerly.

“What mean you? If you have aught to tell, oh, tell me truly. Speak fair with me, for my mind is sorely troubled.”

“As God is to judge me, my Lady,” I said, “I will speak but the truth and hide naught frae ye; and oh, my Lady, compose yersel’, for it’s a woeful happening I hae to tell.”

She got to her feet, straining forward and holding the back of her chair, as if to steady



herself from the shock of strange tidings, and I went on speaking:

"Full weel I ken a' yer story, and it is like to mak' my heart bleed when I think o' it. Sma' profit wad it be for me to speak false. I may e'en come blunt oot and tell ye at the start that I ken baith yer story and his. Never a word, mark ye, hae I gotten frae my master, but yet I ken the story o' my master's journey to France. Never a word got I frae ye, but yet I hae heard frae an eye-witness, strange and past belief as it may seem, o' that awfu' day at Versailles, when my master, crazed and mad, struck ye doon and left ye lying as one deid.

"Ah, my Lady, ye may open wide yer een wi' the wonder o' it, but as God sees me I hae heard it a', and yet never a word frae him. And, oh, my Lady, never would my Laird hae done sic a deed, had he gotten the letter ye left. Ne'er saw he it till back he had gotten after his mad journey, a journey he took in the frenzy o' his troubles after he had found the accursed packet ye had lost or hid, written by a devil that met his death at the hands o' the mob at Versailles, and—dinna stop me, let me tell a'. Ne'er got he your letter till back frae France he had gotten, and when he read



it—oh, I canna tell ye the sorrow and the horror o' that time. Little but pity wad ye feel for him, did ye ken a' that I hae seen him suffer since that day.

“ Oh, my Lady, ye are to be pitied sairly for a' ye hae suffered, but ye mustna judge my master unkindly, for grievously has he suffered, and sadly has he repented, aye, and lives this day a man past a' hope and interest in life, in misery repenting the rashness and madness o' his passion, and mournin' the wife that he loved wi' a' the strength o' a great, noble, manly heart.”

I had spoken with a great earnestness of feeling that was upon me to vindicate my master whom I loved so well, and never did I pause till I had come thus far, but now I took note of the effect of my words, and deep it was, for there was my Lady dropped into her chair, her eyes fixed upon me with an unnatural and steady gaze, awful to see.

There was a silence awful and oppressive for a space, and never a word she spoke, but sat motionless like a statue of marble, staring wildly at me; then suddenly, like one most sorely distraught, she clasped her hands to her head and broke forth into crying and laughing together with so great a vehemence of passion



that no other thought had I but that her reason had fled. I was sorely disturbed, and at a great loss, thinking I had been but a cruel and foolish man to speak as I had, but after a bit space of time, quieter she got, although sobbing as if her heart would break. Then it was that, still sobbing with most piteous voice, and yet with the sweetest smile of peace upon her face that e'er I saw on human countenance, she spoke, telling me the story of her unfortunate life since she left Glenhaugh.

With tears of sorrow at the remembrance, and with prayers to God for pardon of her offences, she told me of that terrible day at Versailles. Deep was my Lady's emotion when she dwelt upon this matter, and thrilling her words when she brought before me the scene wherein the Laird had confronted her like the very spirit of fate—when, in the riot of surging thousands, a wild and cruel man, crazed with unrelenting and angry vengeance, pressed madly upon her with curses shrieking from his lips, and ere she could a moment reflect that this man was no other than the Laird, her husband, there had come the flash of a blade, a throb of cruel pain, and all things passed away.

When my Lady returned to conscious life,



she lay kindly cared for by the women of mercy about her, who had watched her through fever and delirium. When strength returned, she had sought by questions cunningly put forth, to learn something of the story of the awful day of the mob's fury, thinking to hear perchance of the Laird, but naught those about her could tell, only this, that among those that met death on that day, all were Frenchmen, and among these was one who was at first unknown, but afterward recognized as a gentleman of good French family, who had long been a stranger to France, but outlawed and accounted dead, and by name De Courtray.

With a mind sorely troubled, and a heart filled with bitter sadness, she lay for long days longing for death, but time brought life and strength, and at last she was able to arise and move about. Then it was that there came upon her a yearning to go back to Glenhaugh, and there seek the Laird and vindicate her honor, begging anew for pity and forgiveness. Now that Courtray was dead, the hope was strong within her at times that the Laird would listen to her in compassion, and pardon her for the ill she had done in hiding the secret of her past, but still ever against that hope arose despair, for the picture of the Laird in his



wrath, following her in the madness of an unforgiving hate, came before her, and she could find no voice that spoke of love or forgiveness.

That the Laird had gotten the letter left for him, and had read in it her story, that he had read in it her words of love and heart-yearning pleading, she never doubted; and so the violence of his anger seemed the more cruel and relentless. For all these thoughts, still the impulse to return to Glenhaugh grew strong within her, and that which at all times gave strength and resolve to it was a mother's yearning and passionate desire to take her child fondly to her breast again. So it was that she journeyed back to Scotland, and by covert travel and unfamiliar guise sought the home of old Tibbie in the glen, and there besought the old crone, in gratitude for past kindness, to shelter her in hiding.

She had lain at Tibbie's a fortnight when her message came to me by Tibbie's hand. It was often in that time that she had resolved to see the Laird, but each time her heart had failed her. At night she had wandered from the shelter of the glen in Tibbie's company, and had seen the towers of Glenhaugh, and the lights shining from its windows, but still ne'er could she find heart to



descend the hills and stand at Glenhaugh's door.

One day she had ventured forth as far as the Cairn, and there in the gloaming, across the gurgling chasm, she saw the form of a man, wandering as one lost. It was no other than the Laird. At sight of him she fell upon her knees, stretching forth her hands, and cried aloud to him, again and again, but he heard her not in the wild murmur of the falling waters, nor did the Laird see her in the quick falling shadows of the night; for he paused only as if to listen to the voices of the glen, and passed on. It was then my Lady hastened back to Tibbie's, and resolved at last to send for me.

When my Lady had related to me her story with many tears, and had come as far as this that I have told, she arose and knelt before me, taking my hands in hers, and went on most piteously:

"It was God's own voice that bade me at last seek you. Oh, you'll bring him to me, and you'll bring my lass Marion to me; I must speak to her and take her in my arms, my bonny wee lass, my bonny wee lass!" Again she broke into a great and unrestrained convulsion of passionate feeling, as if her heart would burst with its fullness.



It was pitiful to hear her, poor, sad woman, and I felt I could have laid down my life willingly to bring her happiness. After she had become a bit easier and quieter, she got to her feet and, crossing the room, sank limp and exhausted upon the little curtained bed, where she lay, as one who wearied with a heavy load had laid it down relieved, and yet was faint from the stress of it.

Lying there before me with her face in her hands, and her voice gently moaning, I spoke to her words of promise and cheer, and after I had thus done there was a pause, which reverence for this sacred moment made me fear to break; so I sat speechless, and let the silence utter its eloquence of solemnity to me.

When I had thus sat for a space, and while she lay silent, I set about relating many things touching the Laird's search and anxiety, making plain the dreadful cause of his mad journey to France, dwelling upon his getting her letter at last, and the remorse and sickness and sorrow that followed. With tears in my eyes I told her of the Laird's sad life, and a love that followed a woman wronged beyond the sphere of earth and through the portals of the grave. While I gave forth my master's woeful story, she lay clasping her hands and weeping gently,



but there was on her face a smile of the sweetest joy that ever rested on woman's countenance.

After I had spoken at great length, and she had asked me many questions, I be-thought me of returning to Glenhaugh, and when she saw me about to depart, she whispered to me, in a voice that was faint from excess of feeling:

"You'll not forget to bring them to me. You've given me joy to-night, Master Gillicuddy, past all hope. You'll bring him to me, and you'll bring my wee lass to me, that I may lay my face to hers again."

"Aye, my Lady," said I, "e'en that will I do, but I must tak' my ain manner and time in the doin' o' it, for the Laird is na fit to bear a shock like this withoot preparation. A' will be weel, I hope, but ye'll bide in hiding, my Lady, just where ye are, till a' things are ready."

She smiled upon me, promising to heed and trust me, and I left her, passing out into the night again, leaving Tibbie nodding before the fire in sleep. When I was out again I scarcely knew which way to turn, so black was the night, but the rain had fortunately ceased to beat, and I set off with little to guide me but



the slope of the ground. After a slow and tortuous journey, I reached the Abbeyfont highroad, and made thereafter an easy journey to Glenhaugh, where I sought my own room unseen, and, lighting my fire, dried myself and sat down to think.



## CHAPTER XX.

“FORGIVE ME FOR THE WRONG I DID YE.”

YOU may be sure I had much to think of, and some difficult problems to solve, looking forward to the unforeseen turn affairs would now take in the marvelous reappearance of my Lady.

How would I break the news to my Laird? It would, of a verity, be a startling thing to say to my master, “The dead has come to life! The grave has given up the body of her you sent to her death!”

My master had brooded long, and his mind was set upon one sore subject, and that was the death of my Lady. He had dwelt for long months, a man holding communion with the spirit of the dead. Had he not gone so far as to aver that the spiritual essence had a voice that spoke to the sensual ear? A matter which I would now account for in the declaration made by my



Lady that she had called to him in the glen, and which did also, I thought, account for his night wanderings thereafter.

The more I thought over these matters, the greater thought I had that such a revelation as this resurrection from the dead, as it were, would be to my master a thing most serious in its direct effects and consequences. I remembered well what Dr. Smilie had said to me after we had nursed him back from death's door. Had he not said to me that his mind might not suffer another shock? Following the doctor's caution, I had ever maintained a studied silence touching my Lady, and now here was my Lady knocking, so to speak, at our door and crying to my Laird.

After much thinking on this theme, at last I came to the conclusion that in the startling revelation I had in store lay my master's fate, either fair or foul, and as the responsibility of it was greater than I could cope with, it would be wisdom in me to keep silence and seek at once the advice of Dr. Smilie, whose skill and circumspection would direct me in such a delicate business.

That being the conclusion I arrived at, another question pressed itself upon me touching the meeting of my Lady with her



wee Marion. My heart had an eloquent tongue in the consideration of this question, and while misgivings and doubts were in my mind, yet the appeal of a mother to see her child was like to cry down all the reason and circumspection I had.

It was little sleep I got that night, and early I was abroad with a new load of responsibility upon me. When I could get the ear of the wee lass I told her, in a way fitted to her understanding, the story of her mother's return; but first I had soberly enjoined upon her a most sacred promise that she would keep faith with me, and never lisp a word of the secret I had till such time as I gave her leave.

Let it suffice for me to say that I got a firm promise of secrecy and obedience, and that same hour I slipped off with Marion, and saw her ere long in her mother's arms, smoothing her mother's cheek with her little hands, and fondling her with childish caresses in such a touching and sweet affection that I could not be a witness of it, but must e'en turn my back and give way to the tender feeling that overmastered me.

With a promise to bring Marion on the morrow again, and again giving my Lady the explanation that I feared to be too sudden in



breaking the news to my master, but would do my utmost for the good and comfort of all, I took my leave, and back to Glenhaugh I went with Marion, spending the most of my time on the road in counseling and cautioning her to betray no part of the secret of her mother's return by word or act or look until such time as I told her would be proper, and placing before her the jeopardy in which her father stood should the matter be brought to him without my knowledge and consent.

How truly she realized the importance of my commands I cannot say, for she was but a child of seven, but, indeed, she gave me a promise to obey me in all I asked, and chatted with the sweetest words of the joys to come when her father and mother would be reunited.

When I had left her safe at Glenhaugh, the first thing I did was to saddle a horse and post to Abbeyfont town, where I sought Dr. Smilie and laid the whole matter before him. He listened with great interest to all I had to tell, and when I had done, gave me a very prompt opinion that was in keeping with my fears, urging me to keep the matter from my master till such time had elapsed in which his mind would be prepared to receive such a startling



surprise, and even then he feared consequences most serious and disastrous.

So it was that homeward I started, my mind harassed with misgivings of a woeful end to the whole woeful affair if the most circumspect means were not used, and great judgment and delicacy exercised in bringing these two together.

When I had gotten back from Abbeyfont, the first person I met was Esther Ricalton, and when I had asked her where my master was, she told me he was off with Marion.

There was naught uncommon in that, but the information gave me a new anxiety, for now I feared the companionship of these two might be the very means of bringing upon my master the evils that Dr. Smilie had predicted, should my master suffer at this time any severe or sudden shock to his mind.

I knew Marion to be a shrewd child, and I had solemnly charged her to speak no word to the Laird of what she had learned. I knew her love for her father to be both deep and solicitous beyond the common in children of her years, and I had a great faith in her promise of secrecy, for she was ever a lass both earnest and truthful; but still,



notwithstanding all these assurances, my mind was ill at ease, for I feared that the art of dissembling in a matter of such essential interest to both father and child was not like to be maintained under the pressure of circumstances, and that Marion, for all of her childish promises, might readily tell her father all in her childish affection and confidence.

When I asked Esther what road the pair had taken, she said:

"I'm thinkin' it was the Pinlawn way they went, and, 'deed, I'd no' wonder if it was up the glen to auld Tibbie Jamieson's, for no' an hour syne, it was she, the auld witch, that was wandering about Glenhaugh, and tellin' some lang story to the lass Marion, and hardly had she gone hirplin' aff, when the Laird and Marion just took the road thegether."

When I had heard this I had a great misgiving, and no other thing was in my mind but a thought to follow them, and, if need be, come up with them and forestall whatever might tend to let my Lady's secret come to my master.

Off I started, then, and I had Tibbie's cot in my mind, and when I had gotten to the



glen foot, where it met the Abbeyfont road, there who should I meet but Tibbie resting at the side of the road.

"Hae ye set een on the Laird traveling this gate?" I asked.

She blinked at me, mumping with her toothless gums, and getting to her feet, leaned on her staff, while her palsied body shook.

"Aye," said she, "I hae seen him, but 'deed ye'll no' find him this road."

"And what road will I find him?" I asked.

"On the road to Abbeyfont," she said, pointing her trembling staff back toward Glenhaugh.

"Ye're tellin' me lees," said I, "ye auld besom," and I knew she was deceiving me; but though she brought down a curse upon me, and reasserted her words with vehemence, I paid no more heed to her, but began to ascend the path to the glen that I knew would take me to the cottage.

When I had come in sight of the thatched roof, and could get a peep at the cot among the trees, there I saw my master and Marion, hand in hand, not three paces from the door.

I could have fallen where I stood; for all my fears were realized, and my master was on the brink of a precipice, and I was





“HAE YE SET EEN ON THE LAIRD TRAVELING THIS GATE?”







powerless to help him. I was on the point of calling aloud to him in my desperation, with a vague thought that I might lure him away without arousing his shrewd suspicions, but the next moment he and Marion had entered, and I hastened on with a throbbing heart, and came to the door still open and unlatched, and, never pausing, in I went.

As I stepped over the threshold, closing the door behind me, I heard my master's voice speaking: "And what errand had ye in bringing yer faither to auld Tibbie's cot, Marion, my lass?"

"You'll no' guess," said she, with childish glee and a merry laugh.

"'Deed no'," said he, in a kindly humor, and as he said it he turned toward me with a smile on his face, for he had heard the click of the latch as the door swung to behind me.

"I' faith," he went on, nodding toward me, "there's my guid Gillicuddy himsel' newly come after us, and sairly peching at the climbing o' the brae. Belike he'll ken yer secret, my lass, and I'll get an answer frae him when he gets his breath back again."

She turned to me, surprised at my entrance, and gave me a shy glance, being a bit abashed at being found breaking her faith with me, and



seeing me knit my brows with the displeasure I felt at the disobedience she had been guilty of, she ran over to me, and, putting her arms about me, whispered :

“ Dinna be angry wi’ me, my Gillicuddy; it was she that made me bring him here.”

“ She,” said I; “ what she mean ye? ”

“ Auld Tibbie,” she answered. “ Dinna be angry wi’ me.” Then she laid her finger on her lips, and shaking her head at me, ran back to her father before I could speak, and, taking the Laird’s hands in hers, looked back at me, crying with a child’s playfulness :

“ Noo, guid Gillicuddy, dinna tell, dinna tell him a word.”

The Laird, with a smile on his face, looked at me, and little he thought but that the whole matter was a simple bit of childish sport. My mind was ill at rest, yet I fain would have made a light matter of it, if such a thing could have been; but a dreadful misgiving was upon me, and I spoke out as I thought :

“ Ah, my Laird,” I said solemnly, “ I canna tell, but I would to God ye hadna wandered to this door, and oh, Marion, lass, I fear ye hae done a foolish and a wrang thing this day.”

Up spoke my master : “ Hoots, man, hoots! Dinna be ower crusty wi’ the bairn, Gillicuddy;



it's but some lassie's prank. I fear baith you and I, Gillicuddy, are but sorry playfellows for the bairn. What recks it to gie the wean a bit sport wi' me? "

I felt such a fear upon me that I dared not trust my lips to make answer, so I spoke no word, but walked over to the stool beside the fireplace, and sat down and looked at the floor.

As I sat I trembled with a great fear upon me, wondering what destiny had in store for us in this awful hour; for there stood my master not a pace distant from the half-open door behind which was the wife he had lost and whom he believed dead; aye, killed with his own hand. Sitting there, the suspense which I felt was like to destroy my reason, and it was in my mind to drop on my knees and cry to God for mercy upon us. My master never heeded me, but stood with his face partly turned to the door of the inner room, and, looking down upon his wee lass, who held him by both hands, and was smiling up in his face.

"And could ye never mak' a guess?" she was asking, swinging at my master's arms.

"I was never guid at riddles," said he, smiling down upon her.

"They say auld Tibbie is a witch," the child went on.



“ Ah,” said he, “ ye rogue, is it a spell o’ her witchcraft ye wad pit on yer faither here? ”

“ Stoop doon,” she said, “ and let me whisper to ye; but just answer me this first, What wad ye think if Tibbie could bring my ain lost mither back to Glenhaugh? ”

At that my heart gave a thump and seemed to stop its beating. I looked at the Laird, and oh, such a start he made, and raised his arms with a startled gesture, as though a thrill of exquisite pain had passed over him. I saw his face flush, and then in an instant turn pale like death; and an expression of the most terrible anguish was written on his features. He turned toward the child in another moment with a dazed and puzzled face, as if he doubted he had heard the words she uttered. Then he sighed, and like a groan of piteous despair it sounded, and lifting his hand wearily, he passed it over his brow as though he would brush away some painful thought that lay heavy on his mind.

After a dreadful pause, he spoke, and his face was rigid and pale like cold marble, and his words were unspeakably gentle and solemn, and he seemed rather to speak to himself than to the child.

“ And what was that ye said, Marion. Did



ye speak o' yer mithther? My God, lass! ye maunna speak o' her. Her name is a sacred name, and oh, but she has suffered sair, sair wrang. Wad that she were back again that this weary, weary heart o' mine micht fa' at her feet, and tell her o' a' its love, and cry for pardon and for peace; but oh, that canna be! She can ne'er come back again. The grave holds her fast, and her sweet spirit has ta'en its flight to the company o' angels, and there it waits and ca's me."

As he spoke he lifted his eyes as if looking far away beyond the sphere of earth, and I saw his lips quiver with the most piteous emotion, so that my eyes filled with tears, and the pain of my sorrow for him was past all utterance of words.

Still standing before him, with a childish awe at the sadness of his words, and the solemnity of his bearing, the wee lass listened to him with a sober, intent face; but soon a pleased smile lighted her features, as her innocent young heart throbbed with the sweet secret it held for him. I saw her turn to me and smile, laying her finger upon her rosy lips, and then reach upward her arms to him to draw his face to hers, and whisper that which would be the very secret of destiny to him.



At that moment as I bent forward, my heart pausing in the silence to listen, I heard a low, pitiful sob, and there came a weird and moaning cry like the voice of an unseen spirit wailing in our midst.

“My husband; oh, my husband!” were the words I heard, and ah, but there was the language of a sore, weary heart in the cry, and there was the speech of a tender love and the ecstasy of a soul-exultant passion of devotion, intense and sweet, in it.

The next instant the door was softly opened from within, and there before the eyes of my master was my Lady, standing in the flesh before him, her face pale like alabaster, her eyes large and lustrous, a beautiful apparition of saint-like loveliness made spiritual by the touch of overwhelming sorrow and new-born joy.

Reaching forth her arms to her husband, and pleading in silence with a tender yearning of love, I saw her smile upon him, and it was as if I had looked upon the face of one of God’s own seraphim radiant with the light of heaven’s beauty and grace.

I looked to my master, and in a moment I was at his side, and to my dying day never can I shut out the memory of what I saw.



Ah, but his face was a thing to remember; for in it I saw the very reflection of his heart and soul. There was amazement, terror, pity, love, joy flashed upon his face in a moment, and it was but for a moment, for the next instant he raised his hands outstretched above him, and then clasped them to his head, crying:

"My God! it is my wife. Oh, forgive me for the wrong I did ye."

For a moment longer he stood wavering, with his hands clasped to his head and his eyes fastened intently on the face before him, and then, with a cry that died away in a tremulous moan, unutterably plaintive, he fell upon his knees at my Lady's feet, with his arms about her, trembling and moaning like a child that in trouble finds a mother's soothing breast.

Then it was I knew that peace had come to him, for with his tears there came the breaking up of that long spell of grief in which his soul had been held in bondage. Softening and healing were his tears, and in them I knew that all fears for his reason were washed away.

As he knelt in an agony of mingled grief and rapture I saw my Lady bend over him fondly and tenderly, and I saw her white hands resting upon him. I saw my master arise and fold her



in his arms, looking with enraptured gaze into the lovely face that lay pressing close to his heart, and then I could hold back my feelings no longer, but sobbed and sobbed aloud, letting the tears fall unchecked as I turned away. It was then that Marion came to me, and I just put out my arms and drew her close to me, and she laid her head upon my shoulder, and the twain of us just wept together.

It is but little more I need say.

Little need have I to relate those things which may be guessed, or to dwell longer upon those matters through which, in the inscrutable providence of God, ever mysterious to all of his creatures, came blessing and peace out of sorrow and sin.

I have told the story of my Laird as far as I have had the skill to tell it, and if the manner of it and the method of it are not like to win honor for me, there is still one merit I may yet claim, and that is the merit of sincerity; for I have written with a tender love in my heart for my master, and I have suffered again in these pages all that I suffered long years since when I helped to bear his burdens.

As I have dwelt over all the events of that long-gone time, many a tear have I dropped over these pages, and as I close them my heart



is still sad with the memory of them, and in its sadness is softened with compassionate tenderness to all men, and so I may say that if the heart be touched with the suffering of one, it may the likelier learn a wider and deeper sympathy for all of God's creatures who are weary and heavy-laden with the pains and sorrows of the heart.

THE END.







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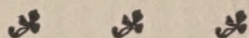
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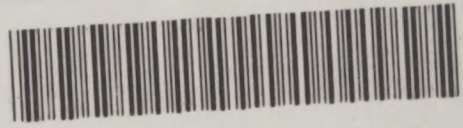
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